

B R I E F B I O G R A P H Y

of the late

VENERABLE PASTOR JOHN FREDERICK BUENGER

THE FAITHFUL PASTOR OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN

IMMANUEL CONGREGATION AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI,

Together with the Solemn Addresses Given at His Funeral

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Net Proceeds are Designated for the Orphan's Home at
St. Louis, Missouri

Publishing House of F. Dette CONCORDIA
HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

'1882

LMK MAR 1981
801 DE MUN
ST. LOUIS, MO. 63105

235

Translated by

Karl W. Keller

1973

86048

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

BX
8080
.B92
W2313
1973

The Biography of the Sainted Pastor John Frederick Buenger

written by

Professor Dr. C. F. W. Walther

Pastor John Frederick Buenger was born on January 2, 1810, at Etzdorf by Rossweln at the foot of the Saxon Erz Mountains. On both his father's and his mother's sides he traced his lineage to an ancient line of ministers reaching back to the time of the Reformation. His father was Jacob Frederick Buenger, pastor at Etzdorf; his mother was Christiane, nee Reiz. She was the daughter of her husband's predecessor at Etzdorf, Pastor William Gottlieb Reiz, who died on March 12, 1808, after a ministry of 28 years.

("This Reiz, born on June 13, 1740, at Windsheim in Bavaria, had been deacon in Greiz in the principality of Reiss and at the same time pastor of a congregation in the vicinity of a town called Caselwitz, prior to his call to Etzdorf by a pious Count von Einsiedel.")

The grandfather of our Buenger on his mother's side belonged to those few who remained faithful witnesses of their Savior and His pure Gospel at the time of the emerging and ultimately dominating Rationalism. They remained so to their death. Already in the year 1765 a communion book appeared in Regensburg, authored by the above and entitled "Experiences of Faith Before, At, and After Holy Communion." It can well be said that every word in it reflected a burning love of Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

The beloved Reiz did not originally prepare for publication the devotions included in his communion book, but drew them up only for himself. He himself says in his preface, "My volumes were intended to be a reminder for me of the unfathomable, immeasurable, and indescribable grace

of Jesus, which my troubled heart had experienced. It was to remain unforgettable for me and always an incentive to faith and sanctification." His notes, however, which had been read by Christian friends in Regensburg, were printed by them that year without his cooperation. As rare at that time as such (spiritual) nourishment was, just so much more quickly did this really "charismatic" little communion book find an ever wider distribution, so that at the beginning of this century the tenth edition, expanded with prayers and hymns, had already appeared in Nürnberg. In the "revised preface" of this edition the pious Relz declares: "What the contents of this writing reveal, particularly concerning the origin of my relationship to Jesus, is such that in all eternity I should not be ashamed to have said with the greatest clarity that, drawn by love, I have sworn to remain faithful to the blessed Savior to my last drop of blood; that I delight perpetually in His wounds, death, and sacrifice; that I find in His love and oneness with me the only and completely imaginable honor, such as all kings could not give me; briefly, that I esteem His inconceivably great grace over against me, worthy of the curse and death, for my highest salvation both this side of the grave and beyond it."

(A paragraph is found in the communion book with the superscription, "Origin of my solemnly renewed bond with the Lord Jesus," which Relz had signed with his name. But room was left so that each reader could inscribe his own name in relation to the Savior. He added, however, "I ask, however, that no one express his conviction out of superstition or mockery, but according to Is. 44:5.")

"Otherwise I also would not have known, since I remained in great distress. I am--and I write this filled with joy--a subject, a possession of the King of Heaven, the Son of God, whom I daily kiss. All temporal

advantages I count as loss over against the overwhelming knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord. I hold as dirt all that would hinder me in my way, only that I may gain Christ and be found in Him; that I may attain righteousness, not that which I might earn according to the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ; that which will be accounted to my faith by God. 'Jesus, Jesus, only Jesus shall be my desire and my good' and my hope of glory before God."

"I can imagine no greater salvation than that which is eternal and all sufficient. This my faith in Him finds in His service and communion, which I enjoy again and again despite the experience of my inward and outward corruption in all circumstances and changes upon earth. For me every communion is a solemn appropriation of the bloody offering of my Lord Jesus and a sweet, an incomparable, foretaste of eternal life. Should I, as it has happened, through such convictions and experiences of my heart still carry doubts to confess Jesus so freely before the world, the Jesus so worthy of confession, and in this way make known my name, unimportant though it be? However, should I for that reason be so completely derided and overthrown, be it before my death or after, so let it happen to me. It can do me no harm. 'Praise God, I am reconciled! That the world still scoffs at me will not last long. In eternity a crown of righteousness is prepared for me.' If only I may and will confess Jesus by name before God and His angels; this will be sufficient honor for me, for me, a poor sinner who considers himself worthy of no heavenly glory, and yet desires it with yearning. For love of my dear Lord I would die a thousand times. Gladly would I give Him as an offering a thousand hearts. With all determination and great courage I offer up my name to Him. And it is grace that I am able solemnly to pledge myself openly before the eyes of His friends and

enemies. I wish to be able to attract all my readers not only as a child of God, but also as a preacher of the Gospel, precisely through my family name (Reiz - to provoke, attract), in all my meditations, prayers, and hymns as strongly as possible. Through faith in Jesus and His blood, they may thereby be saved, and remain so, even as I became and remain through the free grace of God. O Lord, bless to that end these pages! Myself, however, preserve unmoved in the saving bond with Thee until my end."

In the year 1810, two years after the death of the author, the last edition of his communion book appeared in Nürnberg. It included two poems composed by the pious and renowned Nürnberger preacher, J.G. Schoener (who died in 1818), in memory of his "friend of many years", Reiz. We see from it that the beloved Reiz grew up in a truly Christian family and already at the time of his theological studies must have been a believing Christian. In one of these pleasant poems it is stated: (translated here in prose paraphrase)

Reared with care in the likeness of Christ,
He began his youthful course;
Drawn early at the same time into the light of truth,
His way became ever brighter.
The Spirit of the Lord ruled his impulses,
His way to higher schools,
That a warm feeling of God's love for mankind
Already coursed through the youthful witness (testimony).
So soon, so soon the desires burned
Which incite every herald of God:
To preach with simplicity and with honor
That which is written in the entire Bible--*
To preach: forgiveness for the afflicted,
The plentiful help in trouble.
To the weak, strength, much grace among loved ones,
The open heaven after death.
The folk at Etzdorf still heed these teachings;
The hearts of the children still choose Him;
The ill groan to hear the consolation of comfort;
The poor pay their tears over to Him.
A prayer-died, who for the sufferings of his brother
Daily threw himself upon his knees,
Around everything there strove, what in the most fearful times,
Christianity so greatly needed."

*The words "complete Bible" Schoener allowed to be printed in spaced-out letters, to advertise without any doubt, that Relz had preached the complete will of God for the salvation of men as the Holy Scriptures reveal it to us. What a glorious testimony!

That in our brief biography of our worthy John Frederick Buenger we declare so much at this time concerning his grandfather is done for two reasons. First, we wish to use this opportunity to erect a small, well-earned memorial for a sincerely pious man and faithful witness to Jesus the Savior of sinners in a time of apostasy and, second, to indicate that our Buenger came from a greatly blessed family and that the blessings of a truly pious grandfather rested upon him. This was clearly demonstrated in the course of his entire life to his very end. In addition, Buenger's grandfather on his father's side was a sincere man of faith. This can be seen from sermon outlines still available in writing and from several complete sermons that appeared in print. He was John Andrew Buenger. Hailing from northern Germany, he was pastor for many years in Schoenbach, a town in Saxon Voigtland, and lived, well advanced in years, as pastor emeritus in the house of his son at Etzdorf during his last years. He died there only a few days later than the latter. Buenger's father also was no rationalist, but such sturdiness of faith, which had shone in his father-in-law, did not reveal itself in him.

Our Buenger spent his childhood in his parents' home. He received his first instruction partly in the elementary school in his village and partly from his father. With respect to his later development until the time he matriculated at the university, Buenger himself had the following to offer.

(The sainted Director Lindemann, who sought to gather all sorts of biographical notes concerning his close friends, asked our Buenger regarding his life already in 1871, when a trip to Synod offered the opportunity, and made notes of what had been shared with him. Later upon his urgent requests, he received from Buenger himself additional information in writing. What

is written above regarding his youth also belongs to this. Pastor Lindemann in Pittsburgh demonstrated great friendliness in sending the author certain sketches of Buenger received from his father, also the beginning of a biography of Buenger from the pen of his father.)

"My first teacher, upon enrollment in our village school, was our dear Dr. Gbtsch, (died in St. Louis, Mo., as pastor emeritus in 1878) who as a young candidate of theology conducted a so-called schola col-lecta (a privately gathered school) in Rossweln, a town only fifteen minutes away from Etzdorf. I was 10 years old when I enrolled in this school, in which the early foundations of the Latin language were taught. The candidate stressed greatly the physical sciences. To that end we made field trips and gathered plants and stones, bathed energetically in the nearby swimming hole and practiced swimming. Later my uncle, Pastor Ernst Hasse, who had no children, took me with him to Bockwitz by Muckenberg in the Prussian Niederlausnitz. He had very much to do as pastor of three congregations in various locations and for that reason he was not deeply learned. I was often assigned to study by myself, since my liking for study had not been particularly awakened. In the year 1823 my father sent me to the well-known school for the nobility at Meissen. Despite the fact that I had scored very low on the entrance examinations, I was still accepted on probation since I had a full scholarship in the boarding school. Fortunately, I was assigned to a good "senior comrade", whose name was Ehrenstein. He looked after my interests devotedly in the daily lesson at which three or four underclassmen were found at one table with one upper-classman, a primaner. The outcome was that after a yearlong period of grace, I was definitely enrolled. Here I stayed for six years until the spring of 1829, when I passed the matriculation examinations for the university. Two full-time professors and four assistants were stationed at

5 this institution. We also had a special writing instructor, a singing
teacher, an arithmetic teacher, also a special teacher of the French lan-
guage and--a teacher of dancing! But all of these teachers were rational-
our ists. None understood or taught the Gospel of Christ. Because of this a
78) great darkness lay upon the whole school. Nevertheless, there remained
col- steadfastly within me what I had brought along from my parents' house:
en the Bible is God's Word and Jesus Christ is God's Son. Only this, unfor-
this tunately, at this time, did not live within me."

we made As our Buenger at Easter 1829 entered the University of Leipzig, con-
n the ditions, as concerned the true Christian faith, were as dismal at the
or Ernst "highest school" of the land as they were in all of Saxony. Precisely from
berg in this university for many years already there had flowed, as from a spring,
three the poisonous stream of rationalism, of unbelief, of sham enlightenment
deeply and the most frightful distortion of Scripture upon all the congregations
for of Saxony. The preachers, whose misfortune it was to be prepared at that
her sent time to serve the church in Leipzig, proclaimed from their pulpits to the
the fact congregations that, naturally, which their professors had given them as
all ac- the great new wisdom. At the very top of the whole church there stood at
school. that time the chief court chaplain and vice president of the chief consis-
was tory, Christoph Frederick von Ammon, who had written a book with the title,
esson at "Continuation of the Building of Christianity Toward a World Religion."
upper- The brother of the author of this biography rightly declared concerning
of this book that the title ought really to have been, "The Perversion of
l the Christianity Toward a Worldly Religion." The called professors of theolo-
e uni- gy in Leipzig at that time were A. Hahn, F.W. Lindner, J.A.H. Tittman,
ed at K.G.W. Thelle, Ilgen, Winzer, Goldhorn, who were followed later by Nledner,
Winer, and others. The best of these professors were the first two men-
tioned. Yet Hahn, for example, though he fought against rationalism,

carried forward no less than the pure Christian doctrine, while Lindner, although he otherwise appeared resolute, published an entire massive book against the Lutheran doctrine of Holy Communion in the year 1831. The other professors, Tittman excepted, were altogether gross rationalists. There was then great danger for our Buenger, that he might yet lose even the little that he had brought away with him from his father's house and that had been saved during his school years.

Yet Buenger came to Leipzig exactly at that time when a small group of students found themselves together. They had come to faith in the divine authorship of the Holy Scriptures and in the grace of God in Christ, the Savior of sinners, not so much through the lectures of the better professors, as through the witness of believing laity, so-called, and particularly through one old candidate named Kuehn, who lived in his own house in Leipzig. From the very beginning he had been a dedicated Christian. This handful of awakened students gathered on specific days of every week for common prayer and for the common reading of the Holy Scriptures to their edification and for a mutual exchange with respect to the one thing needful. For a while (in imitation of August Hermann Francke), Professor Lindner also privately conducted a so-called collegium philobiblicum, in which he applied the Scripture in an edifying manner and gave instruction in the derivation of sermon themes from biblical texts. The students who had come to faith and who had withdrawn completely from the world, naturally had to submit to much ridicule and derision. Mystics, as one tended to call these believers in Saxony, Pietists, Hypocrites, Obscurantists, Bigots, were not the worst names that man gave them. In part hated as contemptible deceivers, in part sympathized with as unfortunately misguided religious enthusiasts, they were

ostracized by the unbelieving world, and to some extent by their own closest blood relatives. But despite this, they remained inwardly joyful in their God and Savior. All who remained loyal among them, looked back in future years to this time of their first love as the most blessed time of their entire life. So also our dear Buenger.

At first there was no discussion in this circle of the distinction of doctrine of the various churches, although the faith, which had been kindled in these young men solely through the beloved Bible, was naturally none other than Lutheran. It did not remain this way, however. As their understanding grew, the question arose after awhile, raised partly from among themselves, partly from the well-indoctrinated elder candidate Kuehn: Of what faith are you? Are you Lutheran? Or Reformed? Or United? Indeed, the result of this was a revelation. The majority soon recognized that it could be none other than the Lutheran faith that God the Holy Spirit had long since steadfastly sealed through trouble and temptation, even before they had known which church's faith it was. There were only a few who now withdrew. Rather, deeper was the impression made upon these young believers as Candidate Kuehn, (who himself only after protracted, heavy anxieties and battles under the fearful threats of the Law had come to the certainty of the forgiveness of his sin and his state of grace) now sought to lead this awakened little flock on the same path upon which God had taken him. He sought to appraise us, that our Christianity could not rest on a firm foundation unless there was found in us, as in him, a high degree of contrition and actual terror of hell in passionate battles of repentance. The result of this was a general turning from a joyously evangelical to a dismally legalistic Christianity. Some, indeed, who had already had at least similar experiences, were thereby the more sure of their state of grace. Others, however, who now sought to establish

this desired result through their own efforts, fell into great troubles of soul and some, after year-long futile struggles, to the very edge of despair.

The beloved candidate Kuehn, a picture of uprightness and good will, whom every Christian soon loved and respected, was a specific example, when you learned to know him better. On the one hand there was found in him a real evangelical manner. On the other hand, he was so captured by his own behavior that he could not in his own mind reconcile the strengthening of conviction in a young man who had not first come to the certainty of the forgiveness of his sin through long and severe struggles of conscience.

Also our Buenger, who only somewhat later, after such a crisis, entered into the circle of the awakened students, was most earnestly influenced thereby. We beg leave in this regard to share a letter, which candidate Kuehn transmitted to us by the hand of the then candidate Fuerbringer, our highly respected and valued young associate, now pastor at Frankenmuth in the State of Michigan, as we found ourself, because of the Easter holiday in the year 1831, at our parents' home. This letter shows that Kuehn was at heart an evangelical. But precisely for that reason he worked the more powerfully upon inexperienced spirits when he expressed an opinion as to whether they had already experienced true repentance and so were truly converted, or whether they were still not "awakened."

The letter--and we present it exactly as written--is as follows:
"Leipzig, 5 April 1831. The peace of God our Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ be in you and with you, my dear Walther! I am quite curious to know how it is going with you. Indeed, at the same time I always suppress this inner desire, when I recall that my Jesus knows how it goes

with you. He is the selfsame breath, the strengthening breath of life by which you, faithful soul, live and move. He, the Lord of peace, gives you His peace, orders you, preserves you and for that reason you have a sound ground for peace and a good nucleus of peace in your heart. But even though this is very true, nevertheless our heart always yearns also to assure itself of the way in which the Lord of life and death, the Risen One, comforts His own through His powerful resurrection in so many melancholy hours of our Christian life. For that reason I wished to inquire about you, directly through Key! (at that time pastor in Niederfrohna not far from our home place of Langenshursdorf) or through a small message on paper. For my part I look after my Fuerbringer with sadness, yet also with great joy, as I recall the way in which he has separated himself from us." (Fuerbringer had finished his theological studies at that time and was now on the point of next assuming a tutorial position.) "Oh, to be a child of God is a glorious thing! He goes elsewhere, so you come here, for I am deeply concerned about you. If you will come soon, I shall dispense to you at once the entire obligation. And that I would very much like to do. But now, how is it with your heart? Is it besieged? Is it assaulted? Are its walls worn down, sometimes with the banners of love, sometimes with the grenades of reason? How? Is there a gap at some place where the enemy can enter in at night as the watchers sleep? Watch, you guardians of Zion: See to the sacred responsibility of guardianship! (Dan. 4, 14) Watch and pray! Sedate, however, the cunning and power of the wicked foe will have gained advantage over you; sedate, the faint-hearted, the insolent proud heart will have betrayed you with a sweet kiss and you will have been delivered up. What then? How then? Yet no other then as always! Always back to the eternal rock! Back to Golgatha and

to the empty grave of the Risen One! Yet my concern is really vain. We have prayed to Christ that your faith may not cease. And for that reason I have the firm confidence, that He who has begun the good work in you will also fulfill it, fulfilled until His day. For that reason remain confident and undismayed. Be strong. For in what you do, you will be successful, even though you do not always keep success before your eyes. For often the intentions, the deeds are already successful, even before we see them, or those which appear to us to have turned out the worst, are the best. To that end faith, faith in Christ, is the fulfillment of all things. When that happens the heart is in the proper condition. Quietly it goes on and grows and becomes strong and matures. Only then will, may, and can it shine among the people. Now, my dear Walther, pray for yourself and for me and for your committed soul, particularly also for our Fuerbringer, that God, the Risen One may be his guide. Everything that remains, that you wish to know, you can gain from my separated brother in my Lord. May God, the Lord, be your shield and your great reward. Greet your brother. May God give him light and life. This is the prayer and wish of your friend Kuehn."

What a tender concern this bespeaks for the soul of his young friend in a dangerous position. And in what a purely evangelical manner does this man seek to move toward faithfulness and on a course toward a heavenly goal, a man who will shortly triumph at the throne of the Lamb and praise the everlasting mercy of his God!

(One year later Kuehn died, on August 24, 1832, after a short illness with scarlet fever. He was serving as deacon in Lunzenau not far from Penig in Saxony. A pious nobleman, who was the ecclesiastical patron of the district, had called him there. His short term in office was greatly blessed. For long years the population of Lunzenau had heard only the barren work-righteous preaching of rationalism. Now the sweet gospel of Jesus, the

Savior of sinners, rang from their pulpit in testimony of the Spirit and of power. Particularly the poor, for whom Kuehn showed special concern, heard with a great appetite what was to them a new Gospel, and were mightily taken hold by it. When Kuehn, who was a picture of complete health and strength, died so suddenly, the people came to the conclusion that he had been poisoned by his enemies and for that reason there was almost a riot at his burial. His successor was the at-that-time candidate and now Pastor emeritus C.M. Buerger of Rushford, Minnesota. He also had a pious ecclesiastical patron to thank for his call into the ministry, the nobleman Ludwig von Schoenburg-Glauchau. It was almost an impossibility for an orthodox and professionally prepared candidate to receive a position of royal patronage in the kingdom of Saxony through the unbelieving territorial consistory.)

Although at this time the converted students did not find what they sought in the lectures of the professors, they were nevertheless faithful in attendance upon those instructors from whom, according to the regulations, they would later wish to take their examinations. They did this even though the professors never bothered themselves over whether the students attended their lectures diligently, carelessly, or at all. If the students had paid for them, they received without objection at the end of their studies a certificate that they had been diligent auditors.

With respect to attendance upon preaching and church services, at the beginning they went mostly to St. Peter's church where a believing man by the name of F.A. Wolf preached. Later they went to the Church of the Orphans and Correction House, where Pastor F.M. Haensel preached. He was not as elegant and spirited a preacher as Wolf, but his sermons had a richer biblical content.

(In his autobiography Professor Schubert of Munich has the following interesting anecdote to relate of Pastor Haensel to show how dismal the outlook for religion was at that time in Leipzig: "A woman of high standing (a noblewoman), who understood the bread of life and who longed for it from her heart, came through Leipzig on her journey to Thuringia. There were at that time no railroads to accelerate the travel between north and south Germany. The elite travellers had to remain overnight in the city. It was Saturday, and she took great care to celebrate Sunday as the Lord's day. She called the innkeeper to her room. "Mr. Innkeeper", she inquired, "Is there a spiritual man here in the city, an adherent to

the mystics and pietists (as they were called) and who preaches as such?" "No, praise God, your royal grace," answered the innkeeper; "such people we no longer need to hear. Our preachers are nothing but enlightened men, no obscurantists. One single obscurantist remains--a certain Haensel, the preacher at the Home of Correction Church. No one, except the delinquents who must go to his church, and a few unimportant people listen to his old-fashioned title-tattle." The lady had discovered what she wished to know. She dismissed the innkeeper, but requested to see the church announcement for Sunday. Through this she learned the hour at which Haensel would be preaching. The servant was again engaged for the next morning. This man was no little surprised when the noblewoman on Sunday morning expressed the desire that he conduct her and her attendant to the small, poor church of the House of Correction to hear Haensel preach. They went there, in her unostentatious, humble manner, on foot. The simple word of repentance and of the saving power of a living faith in Christ was so completely to her liking, that as she left the church she admonished a fellow worshipper to hear this preacher as often as possible and to listen with sincere devotion.")

Our Buenger, as we already observed, did not come into contact at the University with the already described circle of awakened students during his first year. In this period of his studies, so far as we know, he remained quiet and alone. However, as he was led through the gracious leading of God into this circle, he not only committed himself totally, body and soul, to his God and Lord, but also soon fell into great distress of conscience, together with some others of his fellow students and believers. Like them, he tormented himself day and night to gain the most intense level of penitence and repentance without, however, being able to gain that for which he strove. The less a book invited to faith and the more legalistically it insisted upon contrition of heart and upon the thorough and complete killing of the old man, the more it passed for us as a better book. Very often we read such books only so far as they described the pains and lessons of penitence. If afterwards there was also a description of faith and of comfort for the penitent, we usually closed the book. That, we thought, had nothing to do with us.

(Who now, without first having been incited into doing his own works, without being led to Christ by many false paths, can really appreciate the tremendous grace that God has shown him?)

After these same young men, who in the year 1829 had experienced such a great awakening through the grace of God, had left the University together, Buenger associated himself with the then candidate Brohm, with whom he lived, and also with this writer.

(It is this same now sainted Pastor Brohm who died on September 24 a year ago in Addison, Illinois, and for whom in heartfelt love and friendship our Buenger placed a small memorial in the Lutheran of September 15 of that year.)

When Brohm also left Leipzig, only the last named remained. In him, however, he found only a companion in suffering, and indeed, one who felt twice as bad. With him he shared not only the painful concern regarding his salvation, that reached almost to despair, but also a similar visitation of severe physical suffering. Although from little on up a splendid, fresh, blossoming and powerful figure, and for that very reason formerly an object of general admiration, he now showed the deepest concern and grief and appeared to his relatives and friends to be suffering from a chest illness. He daily spit up blood so that it seemed impossible to prevent certain death in his youth. What Hezekiah had said: "I thought, would that I might live until morning. But he broke all my bones as a lion," (Is. 38:13) that he had to recall frequently with his friends who at that time would have died, oh so gladly, had they only been sure of their salvation. But with them it meant almost day after day:

Oh, it is pain of soul
It rises from my heart
And penetrates through bone and marrow
Only this, this weighs upon me
That I cannot know
Whether I am a true Christian
And that you are my Jesus.

(Fourth verse of the hymn "Enlighten me, Lord, my Light")

The one family in Leipzig who understood us, whose house was always open to us and in which we found refreshment for body and soul, was the family of the blessed tax assessor Barthel and his pious wife, well schooled in the ways of the Lord. (He was the same long-time faithful and unselfish treasurer, F. W. Barthel, who died in St. Louis July 24, 1892.) As the distress of soul brought healing to the body, so the protracted illness of the body brought healing to the soul. So our Buenger left Leipzig after finally completing his studies, looking like a candidate of death, and returned to his beloved parents' home, here to enjoy the tender care of a faithful, loving mother and of no less loving brothers and sisters. Neither he, nor his closest friend, who had shared his experiences in every respect, could appreciate what the Lord had in mind, that neither the physical nor the spiritual illness was an illness to death, but rather, to life and to the proper preparation to service, which God sought to make use of in His church. For whom God wishes to use in His kingdom, him He first destroys, so that he is nothing but the empty instrument of God, and he and all Christians must say: This is not the work of this poor weak sinner, but of the Lord Himself.

Having returned at Easter in the year 1833 from the university to his parents' home, sick and miserable in body and soul, our Buenger undertook a cure and then in August of the same year visited the spa at Radeberg, a village about three hours distant from Dresden. God blessed this course of mineral waters to the extent that at its end Buenger returned to Dresden. Here, where he might again enjoy the association and consolation of his friend Brohm, he could prepare for his first theological examination.

(If one wished to be elected preacher in Saxony, he would have to undergo a twofold examination at the completion of his university studies. The first was called the "examen pro licentia concionandi", which means the "examination to obtain permission", necessary to

always
was the
-11
thful
y 24, 185
acted ill
t Leipzig
death,
er care
lsters.
In
either
ut
od sought
kingdom,
ment of
this
y to his
ndertook
eberg, a
course
Dresden.
of his
lon.
s to
sity
onandi",
to

preach anywhere in the territorial church. Since 1833 this examination was given before a commission of professors from Leipzig. The second examination, which one was permitted to take only two years later, was called "examen pro candidatura", which means the "examination to obtain eligibility" from the territorial consistory.)

So then, he studied with the greatest zeal and the highest success. As a result his rationalistic examiners, hardly less than "gracious", could not afford to deny him the judgment "well done" (passed) on the basis of his examination "pro licentia conclonandi" (passed by him in March 1834), as we see from a report submitted by him and still available. He requested permission for the second examination only at the beginning of the year 1837, partly because of the condition of his health, partly because he had conscience scruples about entering the ministry of the territorial church. Finally he decided to obtain permission also for the second examination and to leave the future entirely under the guidance of his God and Lord. Such permission for the examination required the testimonial of the superintendent, within whose immediate diocese one had resided. So he requested such a testimonial from the superintendent of Ephorie Nossen, to which his hometown Etzdorf belonged. The superintendent, J. Ch. Grosse, a rationalist, set forth the following testimony as of January 20, 1837: Mr. Frederick Buenger of Etzdorf, since leaving Leipzig, has led a life entirely without reproach. Because he suffered from a lung complaint for a long time, in order to free himself from the same he had to undertake a cure a number of times which removed him from his parents' home. It became necessary to postpone until now the attempt for admission to the examination of eligibility. He only participated occasionally in the homiletical and catechetical candidate association at this place. This was occasioned not only by his strong orthodox dogmatic views with respect to the considerable conflicts (collisions) of the conferences,

but also by the circumstances of his health. In the latter case this was due to the two-hour distance from his home from here, especially when bad weather and roads made his personal appearance difficult. Nevertheless, he did not fail, from time to time, to send me a sermon for my perusal, to testify thereby that he was working biblically and in conformity with the text, according to a well-organized arrangement, thorough and for the Christian edification of his audience. In this way he demonstrated how he had made familiarity with the Bible his own possession, together with firmness and constancy in the affirmation of his views. Hopefully, after he has entered more fully into the life of his calling, he will become more charitable with regard to his system of dogmatics and so become a blessed and energetic servant of the faith and the church of Christ. For he lacks neither scholarly knowledge of Christianity nor noble energy to work for its blessed advancement."

So far the testimony. As kindly disposed as this testimony was for a rationalist, yet it served little to recommend our Buenger to his rationalistic examiners. Much more did it have the result that the territorial consistory only proceeded much more severely with him in the examinations set for April 1837 and bestowed upon ^{him} the mark of "sufficient cum asterisco" (which means, somewhat more than sufficient).

In the interval between his first and second examination Buenger occupied himself at his parents' home with the instruction of his younger brothers and sisters. When, however, near the end of the year 1836 his father passed away and the remaining family after a year's time had to leave the family home and disperse, Buenger took a tutorial position first in Pirna and later in Dresden.

Like most of his university friends, our Buenger for some time already

had joined himself to a man and followed his spiritual counsel, one who at that time was regarded as the most experienced pastor in the Saxon territorial church, and as a faithful witness of the traditional orthodox teaching of our evangelical Lutheran church by those Christians who had felt themselves touched by him. This was Martin Stephan, at that time pastor of the Bohemian congregation in Dresden, St. John's church in the suburb of Pirna, where he conducted services in both German and Bohemian. He was born August 13, 1777 at Stramberg in Maehren of poor but pious parents. After having already become a journeyman linen weaver, he enrolled in the Gymnasium at Breslau in the year 1803 and enjoyed the support of pious Christians living there. Later he entered the University of Halle and Leipzig. In the year 1809 he was at first pastor of a small Lutheran congregation at Haber in Bohemia, but within the year (1810) he followed a call to the Bohemian congregation in Dresden. The less that time the Word of God was heard in the other churches of Dresden, the more quickly was Stephan's church filled with souls anxious for salvation. For Stephan really preached the Gospel and that on the basis of his own experience. Like a house of bread, in which every beggar could receive fresh, nutritious bread in a time of bitter famine, so stood Stephan's church there at that time, perhaps the smallest and plainest in that splendid city. Stephan possessed nothing of the art of worldly eloquence. At least they did not apply to this otherwise richly-endowed man. Hardly moving a hand, seldom changing his voice, without any movement in expression, he declared plainly and simply the will of God for man's salvation. He showed the spirituality and severity of the law and the lost condition of every man by nature, and then the gracious kingdom of the Gospel and the certain help which every sinner would find in Christ. Whoever heard him once, if he were

not filled with the spirit of mockery, could feel himself deeply gripped in his inmost being, without really knowing how this happened. So few of his sermons could be called interesting. Yet they gave indication of such power that many who resolved never again to attend his church, so that they would not become even more disturbed, were drawn back again with irresistible force after a short while. Stephan in his sermons went to work not so much on emotion as on conscience.

This considerable knowledge of men and his knowledge of the human heart was very much put to use in this way. There could be no talk that Stephan intended to produce fanatic excitement through his preaching. Whoever overcame (his doubts) and hunted him up to seek his advice and comfort, found the most friendly reception and, as a rule, the most commendable advice and a genuine comfort, one created truly from the word of God and a rich Christian experience. It was a recognized fact, known by Stephan's opponents among the believing pastors of the country, that the most perplexed and troubled souls who turned to them, frequently were directed finally to Stephan, as a man who, if anyone could, could help them put things to rights. So, little by little, Stephan's cure of souls extended itself far and wide about Dresden. Naturally also the unbelieving world finally paid some attention to him. At first he was looked upon only as a dead ruin of an older time, still standing but not worth looking at. Nevertheless, he appeared to the world as a dangerous man whose trade had to be stopped because of his obviously growing influence, not only upon simple uneducated people, but also upon persons well educated and in part highly placed.

Stephan also held private gatherings in the parsonage as had his predecessors, the excellent preachers Czaplowitz and Georg Petermann (whose fine publication, "Of Self-Thinking and of Self-Thinkers", his close friend

the already mentioned W. G. Reiz, published and prefaced in the year 1796. Petermann had already died in 1792.) The meetings there began and ended with songs and prayers. He reviewed catechetically the sermon of the previous Sunday with such practical applications to everyday life that he could not well make from the pulpit. It was these private meetings above all, to which troubled souls streamed for their welfare in ever greater numbers, that provoked the open opposition to Stephan on the part of the world. Already in the year 1821 he was severely attacked in political newspapers as the founder of a new enthusiast sect, (first by name in "Correspondents from and for Germany"). Stephan did not take this quietly, but responded to it likewise, among others, in a political paper, the "National Newspaper of the Germans" in the following fashion:

"I am neither the founder of a sect, nor the leader of a sect. I adhere to neither an old nor a new sect. I hate all the ways of a sect and all "enthusiasms" (fanaticisms). I am an evangelical Lutheran preacher and I preach the word of God as it is written in the Bible. I build my congregation upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets of which Christ is the cornerstone. I hold and preach the apostolic religion, which Luther preached so purely and courageously--I preach law and gospel, the perception of sin and the knowledge of grace in Christ--I preach faith in Jesus Christ, the incarnate God and His reconciliation completed on the cross for the sins of the whole world. This I preach clearly, not in wonderful mystical manner, but in that manner in which our pious forefathers proclaimed it honestly and clearly in our symbolical writings. I have no unusual religious opinion. My religion is based neither above the Bible nor under the Bible but in the Bible. It leads to Christ and is maintained by Him. I conduct my preaching in the church and the repetitions of them

(which those anonymous persons call "prayer meetings") are conducted in my parsonage only with open doors. If this anonymous person (the correspondent of Dresden) held the truth dear, he would have come to the church and to the edification hour and heard and seen for himself what transpired there. It would then have been impossible for him to write the slander that he has written. He would have had to give me and my congregation the testimony that we have thoroughly biblical teachings. The pretense that he has made of the enthusiast debaucheries of my congregation, which he has hatefully designated as a sect, is a spiteful conclusion that he has produced either out of the storehouse of his own heart or out of the mouth of the foolish rabble. Neither madness nor murder has appeared in my congregation (also this was falsely asserted by the correspondent). But were it also established, as it has been asserted, I would be as little at fault as other Dresden spiritual leaders, in whose congregations such sorrowful incidents have actually happened."

As these public insinuations continued without diminution, Stephan in the year 1823 produced two sermons with a preface in which he wrote the following, among others:

"But will some perhaps say, if in the church no false doctrine has been proclaimed, will it not be spread through the edification hours? Will not enthusiasm and sect-ways be brought about in this way? Not at all. I proclaim there no other teaching than that I preach in the church. They consist in part of repetitions of the sermons, edifying explanations of the Bible, a brief singing from the hymn book, conversations about all manner of matters in the true Christianity, mutual prayer or readings from commonly recognized good Christian literature, for example, Luther's works and the biblical summaries of the theological faculty at Tuebingen (Leipzig 1709).

All this occurs with open doors, and entry is permitted to everyone without exception, just as in the church...It is not the meeting place, but false doctrine which establishes a sect."

In what followed Stephan described the origin of his edification hours. At the beginning of the Thirty Years' War all Protestant congregations and families were driven out of Bohemia and Moravia by the Emperor Ferdinand II. Since they had the same confession and the same constitution as we Lutherans, they turned above all to Lutheran countries and in the year 1639 a group of the same came also to Dresden, where the Elector John George II permitted them to hold church services in the occupied dwellings of their preachers. This continued through a succession of years until St. John's Church in Dresden was assigned to them for their free use in the year 1650. Through these original church services in the parsonage it had become a necessity for the congregation to have edification meetings in the dwelling of their preachers also during the week. It was this, and not some inclination toward enthusiasm and desire for separation, that originated the custom, now nearly two centuries old, of religious gatherings outside the church building. In the year 1825 Stephan published a complete annual set of sermons. In its preface he wrote:

"What I have preached, that I myself believe with my whole heart. I am fully convinced, that only the Bible can be a spring of pure Christian doctrine. From this our pious forefathers have drawn and have preserved for us the pure doctrine in the confessional writings of our Lutheran Church. To spread this pure doctrine is also my honest endeavor in this volume. I have endeavored to follow the Bible everywhere in my explanation and application of divine truths because I am convinced that the Bible can best explain itself. One statement explains another. One story is made plain through another. One apostle is clarified through another, and all the

prophets and apostles appear in their full clarity in Christ and arrive at the evidences of their divine truthfulness through Him."

Finally, in the year 1833, a "Confession of Faith of St. John's Congregation in Dresden" was issued, and "at the same time", as it stated in the title, "a setting forth of accusations of it and its pastor, made in some public newspapers." (Dresden 1833) This was a comprehensive booklet of 74 pages in which the congregation of Stephan, still in the year 1833, stated the same simple sober Lutheran confession. In it they called upon all recognized orthodox teachers of our church from Luther on to the most recent time, and this indeed by names.

Our esteemed readers will forgive us that we have permitted ourselves this digression in our biographical description of the sainted Buenger. We have not done this without a purpose. Our Buenger, as we have already observed, while in Dresden, in part living as a private gentleman, in part holding the office of a tutor, associated himself closely with Stephan. This relationship with him was indeed of decisive influence upon his entire life thereafter until his undoubtedly blessed death. Many, also well-wishers when they hear that someone has associated himself closely to Stephan, would be thereby filled with the suspicion that such a one certainly could not be a true Christian, taking his soul in his hands and with fear and trembling working that he might be saved, since it is well known to what a sad ending the poor Stephan came. But while such suspicion is indeed not undeserved, yet, God knows, it is without foundation. It was precisely the most serious concern for his salvation, to be ready for the salvation of his eternal soul, to give everything, happiness, material goods and honor--only this concern of our Buenger, and of many of his university friends--that induced him to attach himself so closely to Stephan. It is true that Stephan

At this Rudelbach was deeply moved and answered, "No, my dear Walther, such a one you should not forsake. In God's name remain in association with him. But watch. Guard yourself from all idolatry of man!" This warning the author accepted with sincere thanks and also acted upon it to the extent that the grace of God gave him insight.)

Certainly our Buenger saw that at the very least Stephan gave an evil appearance. But alas! Were not the believers at that time and also he, not accustomed to judge all things unyieldingly according to the written Word of God? Otherwise to be sure, Buenger no longer would have followed Stephan, as it is written, "Avoid all appearance of evil. (1 Thess. 5:22), since Stephan, despite all dissuasions from the appearance of evil, alas! did not avoid. Certainly, sometimes Buenger was seized with tormenting doubt as to whether Stephan was the man of God that his supporters considered him to be. But at first, because he lacked sufficient evidence, these doubts appeared to him to be the sinful fruits of his suspicious heart, for which he after secretly apologized to God. And for another thing, his hear told him: "Where will you go if you forsake this community? Where then is the true doctrine and where then true seriousness, if these are disavowed either with word or with deed? Where is rigorous support for the confession of our church?

(Stephan pointed again and again to the necessity of becoming familiar with the confessions of our church and studying them. At his instructions for that reason, those candidates associated with him had to conduct so-called Book of Concord hours in the homes of the various members, which were faithfully attended.)

"Where is the Christian experience that can give me counsel in all spiritual distresses, also the most severe?" In short, his conscience was held captive. So then, he remained there, precisely where he had discovered all those of whom he knew that they, like he, "had risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts: 15:26) and were prepared, like Paul, "not only to be imprisoned, but even to die for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

when Buenger made him his spiritual counsellor, was no longer what he had earlier been. Much of a suspicious nature had already then made its appearance. But inexperienced as he was, he found it impossible to accept the inward collapse of a man, who for more than twenty years, as it appeared to him, had stood as the one last remaining witness to the pure Lutheran doctrine in Saxony and through whom most certainly thousands had been brought to a living faith in Christ and through whom also his soul had been brought from nameless anxieties to peace.

(The author of this biography had had the same experience. First when no one knew how to advise him in his severe spiritual temptations, and when contrariwise also the believing pastors, whose calling implied greater Christian experience and to whom he revealed himself in seeking help, all directed him to Stephan. Only then did he also turn to Stephan in writing, asking him for counsel from the Word of God. He did this with no particular confidence in the person of Stephan, and with no particular hope that in him he would find what he was seeking. For at that time this man's volume of sermons appeared to him, in the light of his spiritual circumstances, as not sufficiently severe, not insistent enough upon profound penitence and repentance. When this author finally received a reply, he did not open the letter until he had fervently called upon God to preserve him, lest he assume a false comfort should this be the substance of the answer which he had received. But after he had read it, it was as though he had suddenly been transplanted from hell to heaven. Tears that had for so long a time been tears of fear and distress were changed into tears of truly heavenly joy. He could not withstand. He had to go to Jesus. Stephan showed to him that the repentance from the law which he was seeking, he had already experienced; that at this time he lacked nothing but faith; nothing, except that he now yield himself to the merciful heavenly Samaritan as one who had fallen among the murderers. So now the peace of God found a place in him. Thus he experienced in a real way, what private absolution is for a sinner who is frightened with all his heart. Indeed, in his writing Stephan did not express a formal absolution, but he applied the Gospel to him personally, in which truly the peculiar essence of private absolution subsists.

About a half year later this writer made an appointment with the late consistorial counsel and superintendent, Dr. Rudelbach in Glauchau, since the latter proposed him as tutor for his pious count. But he required of this writer that he break off all association with Stephan. Whereupon the author recounted at great length to this excellent man what had led him to Stephan and what he had to thank him for, and finally finished with the question:

"Shall I forsake a man, who through the grace of God has saved my soul?"

Certainly, he saw with his own eyes how idolatrously Stephan's most intimate followers honored him and how unconditionally they subjected themselves to his decisions, also in matters of conscience. Privately he persuaded himself, that this was nothing but the thankful recognition of that which God had given Stephan, and only a subjection to the Word of God, by which he determined his decisions. Certainly the dreadful accusations, which the world raised against Stephan, often made a deep, alarming impression on him. But since Stephan up to this time had come off quite innocent and justified in everything, also the governmental investigations, so Buenger reckoned that all these accusations were nothing more than slanders, which the godless world fomented in hatred against Christ and against the true, living Christianity, and always against the faithful servants of Christ. The more Stephan was covered with ignominy, so much the more Buenger regarded it as his sacred duty not to be ashamed of him. So also Paul in his chains admonished Timothy: "Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but take your share of suffering for the Gospel in the power of God." (II Tim. 1:8) Indeed, whoever has never experienced what it means to be fearful of going lost and because of this having a captive, trembling conscience, can never declare how a soul so honorable and upright as that of Buenger can be held fast by a Stephan. What result this had for his entire future life, we shall see in what follows.

As our Buenger associated himself with Stephan, he had come to occupy himself more and more as time went on with the thought that with the ever growing decline of the Saxon territorial church from year to year for the true Lutherans, including preachers as well as the laity, finally nothing was left to do but to emigrate if they wished to save their conscience and preserve the blessings of a properly believing church for themselves and

their children. It was a matter of fact that already for some twenty years Stephan had spoken with Professor Benjamin Kurz of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania of the possibility, perhaps soon, of having to emigrate for reasons of conscience, as this man travelled in Germany and also visited Stephan. It is further a matter of fact that Stephan thereupon entered into correspondence with Kurz in the year 1830 about this matter. At first Stephan shared this with only a few confidants, but just about the same time that Buenger moved to Dresden for awhile, Stephan began to initiate all his associates into this, his secret. Like almost all who were in association with Stephan, so also our Buenger was soon fully convinced of the ever approaching necessity of emigration for faithful Lutheran Christians.

It is true that at that time preachers of the Saxon territorial church were still obligated by oath to the entire Book of Concord without restriction. But this obligation was nothing but an empty formality. No man inquired afterward whether it was being honored, since those very people who should take the oath on the confessions of the church from the preachers and teachers, seldom complied with this oath themselves. To present just one example: When this writer, in one of the so-called "circular sermons" held before his superintendent, testified that death first came into the world through the fall into sin of our first parents, this honorable gentleman censured this as an idea obsolete for a long time. And when this writer thereupon reminded the superintendent that less than a year ago in this very same place he himself had bound him by oath to the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church in which this teaching was found, the superintendent then answered: "You have been obligated not by the letter but by the spirit of the symbols." We answered: "In the ritual of obligation no mention was made of this. Moreover, it is clearly and plainly written in the Scriptures, 'On the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.'" The superintendent replied

"Oh that! That refers to spiritual death." We responded: "Did not God say right after the fall of Adam, 'Dust you are and to dust you shall return'? Is this too a reference to spiritual death?" The superintendent thereupon dropped his eyes, remained silent--and left us.

But just as at that time the unconditional oath upon the Book of Concord was an empty comedy, so at the same time the most important arrangements of the territorial church were just so many actual notorious denials of the sworn churchly confessions. This clearly demonstrated that one could assert that the Saxon territorial church was still a Lutheran one and so a properly believing church, since within it the confession still existed as claimed, only upon the basis of Jesuitical principles of morality. It was already in 1812 that a church book or so-called agenda was introduced that a believing Lutheran pastor could use only with a bad conscience. In part it openly denied divine truth and in part it contained Christian teaching in formulas miserably watered down. And to that must now be added this: Since no one inquired whether the rationalistic, unbelieving preachers addressed themselves to the Agenda, which still sounded too Christian, so no one could risk opposing a believing Lutheran preacher who departed from it in any way. If he did this, and it came before his superiors, he would be called to account for this reason most earnestly. As with others, this writer made use of an old form of absolution, which was not included in the Agenda. Because of this his unbelieving school teacher brought action against him before his superintendent. The latter forthwith reported the matter to the territorial consistory, which strictly forbade him the use of the old form of absolution. They admonished him anew, where absolution was administered, to proclaim the forgiveness of sins in every case only according to the Agenda, and they ordered him to bear the increased costs due to the handling of the matter through correspondence. Moreover, a believing

preacher suffered even greater distress of conscience, when he would conduct special and particular services of the consistory and read aloud from the pulpit the miserable prayers sent to him that were intended to proclaim God. Furthermore, a rationalistic hymn book was introduced, miserable beyond measure, from which a believing preacher could allow singing only with a bad conscience. "Virtue is the Life of the Soul",--so began not only a hymn therein, but this at the same time characterized the spirit of most of the hymns included in the hymn book. At the same time, the few acceptable songs still found there were most adulterated, so that a believing preacher could seldom find a song for his sermon.

Also the school books in use were all thoroughly penetrated by the leaven of rationalism. A believing pastor, as the so-called spiritual inspector of the village school, was stuck coming and going, in deep distress of conscience. Where for some reason acceptable school books had been kept, there the rationalistic superintendent worked with great energy to the end that these were discarded and replaced with rationalistic books. When this writer sought to introduce a school reader grounded in the Christian spirit, he was denounced to the superintendent by his unbelieving school master. This man then allied himself with the ignorant village school board and with them sought to force the immediate installation of a so-called "Friend of the School", who was just as miserable and anti-Christian. By God's gracious dispensation this, however, did not happen because this writer turned to his pious church patron, the Minister of State, Count Detlev von Einsiedel. In order to win the congregation's approval, he not only made them the gift of a great number of copies of a good school reader, but also interceded in the matter with the district board which had to decide in such things at the highest level. This time this writer did not have to bear the not insignificant costs of the procedure carried out in this manner (which he naturally did with

joy). In fact, on the day before his emigration, his congregation, unbidden, repaid him with the explanation that the procedure had been undertaken only for the welfare of their children. Moreover, to believing Lutheran pastors of the Saxon territorial church, the highest level of conscience burdening was that, contrary to the clear word of God by virtue of their call in the territorial church, not only were they forced into ecclesiastical, sacramental and fraternal association with false teachers, yes, with the most obvious heretics, but also that they even had to acknowledge them as senior shepherds, to be examined and ordained by them, to make their oath to the confessions before them and to be installed into office by them. Yes, these very pastors had to allow the divine truth to be blasphemed before their own congregation and their devil's teaching to be spilled out before them. When this writer delivered his trial sermon and was shortly thereafter ordained before his congregation, the officiating superintendent in his remarks blasphemed by speaking of Elijah and David as common murderers. He warned him of a Christianity which destroyed the joys of this life, and blasphemously challenged him to preach a more cheerful Christianity, such as Christ had preached with his deed at the wedding of Cana! Of course, in the final analysis, a believing Lutheran pastor prepared for no small pain to his conscience in that he is forbidden the practice of announcement for confession, as also the suspension of the impenitent man from the Lord's Supper and, most importantly, all practice of church discipline.

At the same time the believing Lutheran laity in Saxony were involved in no smaller distress of conscience. They were expected to recognize openly false prophets as their shepherds and pastors, have their children baptized and confirmed by them, and receive absolution in confession and Holy Communion from them. They were to entrust their children to unbelieving schoolmasters for instruction in religion and for Christian education, and

to that end purchase godless school books for them and themselves & give them into their hands. Great distress arose as often as a child was born to believing parents. Among the five baptismal rites contained in the Agenda there was only one that was tolerable to a certain extent. So then, a father had to hurry to his unbelieving pastor and humbly petition for the use of this one order of service. Even then, this petition was only seldom granted him. With a deeply hurt conscience he often had to take his baptized infant back home again, washed indeed by an enemy of Christ in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, but this with a rationalistic frame of reference.

(At that time, moreover, there were in Saxony also such pastors who baptized without once using the Trinitarian wording. Nevertheless, we do not know of any case in which such dared to do this for the children of parents whom they knew to be believers.)

In the year 1836 this writer received a letter from a candidate of theology in a well-known city, in which he described the case of a baptism of this kind which he himself had observed in the following manner: "Mr. H. (a believing Lutheran layman) betook himself, some days after the delivery of his wife, to Pastor S. and, of the five orders of service in the Agenda, asked him to use the only one conforming to the Scriptures for the impending baptism of his child. Pastor S. received him with unparalleled consideration and met his request with a readiness to oblige. Mr. H with his wife and myself, the chosen sponsor, thereupon betook ourselves unsuspectingly to the church. The baptism began. He read from the requested order of service until he came to the section where the Lord's Prayer was to follow. At that point he threw in a self-composed prayer, hurried quickly to the name giving, spoke the Apostles' Creed in place of the questions to the sponsors in the manner: 'We believe, etc.', and with the omission of the question, 'Do you renounce the devil, etc.,' he completed the baptism with haste. We

were taken by surprise and, contrite (I can use this word without exaggeration) over our behavior we, the deceived, stood there.

We, Mr. N. and I, hurried immediately after Pastor S. into his panelled preparation room in the sacristy, and rebuked him for the violation of his promise. At first he denied it, but it was proven to him from the Agenda that he had falsified the first order of service. Perplexed, he said with stubborn anger that he wished to review the omission which he had already observed in the conversation just conducted. And so we sat down again, stared at by the midwife and sponsors of another child, on hand for baptism. Pastor S., before he returned to the other baptism, came to us angrily with the words, 'But you will write down your names!' and then, quickly and in great excitement, making a slip of the tongue one time after another, he completed the other baptism. Then, turning himself to the sexton, he snorted, 'Let the people step forward!' We stepped to the baptismal font. Mr. N. took the child in his arms and after he, Pastor S., had loudly made the observation, 'These people have dared to give instructions to a teacher of religion. I yield to them, since I take into consideration their weakness', he took the questions literally from the Agenda, 'Do you renounce the devil!' (to the general tittering and astonished exclamations of those present) and then conferred the sign of the cross on the breast and forehead. "But you," he cried then, audible to all, since he had called me into his panelled office, 'you wish to be a scientific, educated man! Point out to me where the renouncing of the devil is ordered!' It was contrary to his conviction. I answered: "It is not necessary for me to point out to you a place in the Bible. You as a steward of the church are bound to your vows. You have broken your promise. You should not have promised anything that was contrary to your conviction."

"I do not know exactly, now, what I all said in indignation. Enough.

I left him with the words, 'We will take up the incident according to our general regulation.'" So far the account.

In this manner a rationalistic pastor conducted himself over against a candidate, to whose generally recognized learning he should indeed show respect. But if he who asked for the baptism according to ecclesiastical regulations was a man of unimportant standing, perhaps a poor linen weaver or stocking-weaver, then quite different scenes took place at the baptismal font, should such a one dare in any way to express his opinions publicly. First of all, he would almost never receive the promise from his pastor that he would baptize his child according to Lutheran churchly usage. If he thereupon dared to express his dissatisfaction with the manner in which the baptism had been consummated, he had to be happy at being dismissed only with invective and not accused and punished as well as an insolent violator of the church. As difficult as it often finally became for many poor believing Lutheran laity to travel afar for many hours if they wished for once to hear a Christian sermon, nevertheless, this was still the least that they had to bear. Many, after having worked hard in the sweat of their brow through the entire week from morning until late at night for the purpose of earning a scanty daily bread for their families, when Sunday came regularly got up shortly after midnight so that in a distant church they might refresh their parched hearts with the preaching of the pure, saving Word of God. If this occurred, they thereupon travelled back on Sunday evening with joy and, with souls strengthened, began again on Monday the work of the week, which provided so scantily for themselves and their families.

How gladly at that time would believing Lutheran clergy and laity have given everything to have received permission to affiliate themselves with one of the "deeply corrupted, apostate, Lutheran free churches" separated from the territorial church! But at that time their charity for such a

purpose was absolutely unthinkable. Emigration to a country in which freedom of religion reigned was recognized, therefore, as the only solution, to leave the oppression of conscience that was becoming more and more unbearable, and threatening to choke all life of faith in them. To this was added the warning example which the Saxon Lutherans saw in the fate of the separated Prussian Lutherans. For when, after unsuccessful loyal and ardent battles against the union and after suffering heavy persecution, many of these applied for permission to emigrate, their request was flatly denied by the operation of the Minister of Public Worship of Altenstein, even though a Prussian law of the year 1818 expressly permitted the emigration. The Saxon Lutherans feared, not without foundation, that a fate similar to that of the valiant Prussians confronted them if they would not try to be dismissed in peace. When toward the end of the year 1837 in Prussia the tyrannical prohibition to emigrate was again upheld by royal order, and yet Pastor Grabau emigrated to America with a great number of Prussian Lutherans and likewise Pastor Kavel to Australia with a smaller number, the Saxons were strengthened by this in their resolve to do the same. For, even though in the Saxon territorial church the union between the Lutherans and the Reformed had not, as in Prussia, been introduced formally by a specific law, nevertheless, they were in fact long since united. It was for this reason, to mention just one example, that such a variety of orders of service for the handling of the ministry in the Saxon church had been adopted. Unbelieving pastors could serve therein in the same manner as believing pastors, and unbelieving laity could find assurance therein in the same manner as believing. Only that, unfairly, more care was taken for the former than the latter. In brief, the union in the Saxon territorial church was indeed not a union between Reformed and Lutheran but a union between unbelievers and believers. There is,

therefore, no question. The emigration upon which a great many Saxon Lutherans finally agreed at that time was not their sin. Much more, for far too long they had considered it necessary to do much against their conscience, something they had regarded as inevitable. Particularly the pastors did not at first run the risk of being relieved of their offices and thrown out of the country because of a divinely commanded opposition to instructions contrary to God's command.

When Stephan gave the signal for the start to America, also our Buenger as we said, was quickly convinced that God's hour, the hour of deliverance, had come. So he joined the emigration society which had been quietly organized. He did this in no way with joy, but with deep hurt and pain in his heart that it should be necessary to forsake a precious fatherland. He also did not do this in the hope that he would find good times in America, but on the contrary (expected) many and great material needs. That which alone attracted him to America was deliverance from the oppression of conscience and the precious good of freedom to serve God according to His Word. So many, also pious men, condemned not only the way and manner of the emigration which to be sure was bound up with many sins of ignorance, but rejected the emigration itself as sin, as a flight out of season. But this was not able to perplex our Buenger.

(Also Rudelbach at that time condemned the emigration as premature, and yet this beloved man some years later (1845) chose the same expedient to save his conscience. He himself explained in his printed farewell sermon what had moved him to lay down his office as superintendent, consistorial counsellor and examiner within the Saxon territorial church, to forsake Saxony and return to Denmark. He wrote: "It was not only that abuses crying to heaven in our church were tolerated (what heart of an evangelical teacher did not bleed when he observed such want of discipline before his very eyes touching without restraint the Word and Sacrament itself!) but public measures were proposed and to some extent already carried through to open our church to an anti-Christian party (the German Catholics or Rongianer). My hand would have to wither away, had I subscribed to only the smallest letter to such measures unfolding themselves with lightning speed. And by virtue of my position I would be called

upon to carry them out. I was bound by a holy, inviolable oath to defend the confession of our church with word and deed, with body and life, physically and materially. Only one protest remained. That protest is--to lay down my office.")

He had no other purpose but to save his poor conscience and his soul, purchased so dearly by Christ. He, therefore, left his beloved homeland with tear-filled eyes, but with a heart that trusted in God, not knowing what awaited him in America. Of this, however, he was certain; he was doing what God in His Word ordered.

It was in October of the year 1838 that from time to time bands, members of the Saxon-Lutheran emigration society, mostly in larger and smaller groups, arrived at Bremen. From here the departure for America should occur via New Orleans to St. Louis in the State of Missouri first of all.

(Already in the summer of that year a committee composed of two people had travelled to Bremen and had chartered five ships, the fifth ship, however, only in greater part. The society consisted of somewhat more than 700 souls from almost all parts of Germany. It included 6 pastors, 8 theological candidates, 1 school teacher, 3 teacher candidates, 2 physicians, 1 medical student, 1 doctor of laws, 1 attorney, 2 artists, and several individuals who had been civil servants and merchants. The greatest number, however, were tradesmen and farm people. An emigration plan was designed to which all those who were self-supporting males had to subscribe if they wished to associate themselves with the society. This emigration plan (we present it only with omission of the non-essential points reads as follows:

"No. 1. Confession of Faith: The undersigned jointly profess with sincere hearts the orthodox Lutheran faith as it is found in the Word of God and the Old and New Testaments and set forth and confessed in the symbolical writings of the Lutheran Church...

No. 2. Emigration, its Cause, Purpose, and Goal: After the most mature deliberation they see for themselves the human impossibility of keeping this faith pure and unadulterated in the present homeland, of confessing it and of propagating it to their descendants. They are, therefore, compelled by their conscience to emigrate and seek a land where this Lutheran faith is not endangered, where they serve God undisturbed according to the gracious dispensation that He has revealed and established and where, in their completeness and purity, they are able to enjoy undisturbed the means of grace, which God has ordained for all men to their salvation, and to preserve them for themselves and their children. To these means of grace belong primarily: the Office of Reconciliation to its fullest extent and with undiminished freedom; pure and free worship; comple

soul,
and
ing what
g what
mem-
maller
d occur
eople
ship,
t more
pastors,
, 2
rtists,
s.
n emi-
rting
th the
of the
th
he
on-
it
ility
me-
nts.
and
they
that
ess
race,
pre-
of
allest
complete

and pure preaching of the Word of God; complete and pure sacraments; the care and nurture of souls without disturbance and hindrance. One such land, such as they are seeking, is the United States of North America, where, as nowhere else in the world, complete religious and civil freedom reigns and where a powerful, genuine protection of the same against foreign interference is found...

- No. 3. Religious and Civil Regulation: The undersigned solemnly promise with Christian sincerity and willingness to submit to the established church, civic and school regulations and especially to church discipline as it has been arranged.
- No. 4. The place of settlement in the United States of North America shall be chosen in one of the western states, in Missouri, Illinois, or Indiana. For this reason (#5-Route of Travel) the next objective of the journey shall be the city of St. Louis, Missouri, which lies at the midpoint of all these states and serves as the principal commercial city. The place of embarkation in Europe shall be Hamburg or Bremen and the debarkation point, New Orleans, from where St. Louis shall be reached by means of river boat passage on the Mississippi.
- No. 6. Purchase of Property. A strip of contiguous land holdings shall be purchased out of St. Louis by a committee of a number of emigrants and, after deducting what must be left for church, school, and congregation, individual parcels shall be set aside for each individual according to his needs. These landholdings shall, together, comprise the village or township. Outside of the village each one is free to purchase as much land as he would like.
- No. 7. Assumption of All Church and Common Taxes for Five Years.
- No. 8. Mutual assistance (no common ownership of goods).
- No. 9. Credit Treasury. A money advance or credit treasury shall be established for the temporary defrayal of the necessary expenses for church, school, and congregational needs, for the support of poor emigrants through the advance of money for the purchase of the above mentioned strip of landholdings...The deposits depend upon the free decision of every man.
- No. 10. Christian simplicity, honesty, and truthfulness must rule in all transactions, in all promises and assurances, and to that end all formalities and verbiages that are not indispensably necessary should be avoided.
- No. 11. The undersigned declare that each one has been allowed to come along or to remain at home on the basis of his completely free choice."

It was on Saturday, the 20th of October 1838, that our Buenger set out upon his journey from Dresden to Bremen. Since he was still always ailing

somewhat, with the advice of Stephan he decided in favor of making the journey as far as Domitz on the Elbe below Wittenberg by boat. Buenger kept a diary covering the happenings on this journey which has been placed at our disposal. We shall permit our readers to share herewith something of this, and that literally.

"20 October 1838, 12:30 noon, was the exact moment that our deliverance began. There were only 44 persons on board, since some could not come along because of the passports. Upon an invitation previously extended, the Lord Jesus Christ was simply, yet privately, thanked for the hour of deliverance that had arrived and He, the Lord of His church, was called upon to provide His gracious presence, His protection and attendance upon the journey and for the deliverance and following of those who remained behind. A crowd of curious spectators, who had already waited upon our departure for several hours, followed us with their eyes and to some extent with good wishes, but for the most part with curses.

(Emigration across the sea occurred at that time only seldom in Saxony; up to this time an emigration for the sake of religion had never happened.)

So, as I came on board, I heard one distinguished man say to another: 'These foolish Stephanite people will all perish. They are all going to meet their destruction. They think Stephan is Lord and Savior. Those foolish people!' Oh how happy we are, that we know our Lord and Savior better than they believe we do! That we know Him aright, that we have the faithful preaching of our dear pastor to thank for. At Priesnitz we came upon the first boat, which had left already on the 18th of the month, but which had been held up by storm and the wish to travel with us. The following arrangement was now made below the decks

The entire steerage was divided into three separate rooms with a kind of wall of boxes. In the room closest to the cabins were quartered the families; in the second, the unmarried women, and in the third, the unmarried men. About 10 o'clock we received two additional passengers, S.H., who was a patient, and Mr. T."

"21 October. Today was Sunday. At 10 o'clock we gathered together for our church service. In order not to create a stir, we did not sing. I read the Kyrle, the All Glory be to God Alone, etc., and the sermon of Pastor Stephan. It was greatly comforting to us that the Gospel for this day (for the 19th Sunday after Trinity-- Matt. 9:1) began with the words, "And he entered into a ship and passed over." After the sermon followed the common confession, the Lord's Prayer, a short prayer for the present circumstances and in conclusion the fine appropriate hymn from the old Leipzig hymn-
nal, No. 675:

In the name of God travel we,
His holy angels with us be,
Like the people in Egyptland,
Who escaped King Pharaoh's hand
Kyrle eleison.

"At 11 o'clock we passed by Hirschberg. Since it was a tighter fitting in the first boat than in ours, it was suggested that some of the persons there should move in with us. But none of the families would decide to give up their arrangement. This opportunity revealed an inflexibility especially among the women. In order, however, to provide some air, we took the unmarried people into our boat. I remained on the other boat and led the church service. About 4 o'clock I catechized the children on our boat with respect to the Gospel and the sermon, in which I dealt with the truth: "Jesus Christ has the power and willingness to forgive us our sins. He can make that which has happened like that which has not happened. About 9 o'clock in the evening there was a common devotion. I read the first Psalm and an evening hymn, spoke the Lord's Prayer and concluded with the Apostolic Benediction."

"22 October. Soon after the morning devotion I catechized the children concerning the First Commandment. Close to 11 o'clock we landed at Muehlberg. The border guards were very friendly, visited both ships but inquired after none of the passports. This pleased us greatly since ineligible persons were found among us because some had not yet received their passports. On the other (the first) side the resolution was passed with respect to common morning and evening devotion that Mr. Staerzel, Junior, should by agreement conduct the devotion, as with us, and after the hour of prayer have the children say a chief part of the Catechism and read something. I was present at the first evening devotion."

"23 October. After the morning devotion catechization on the Second Commandment. The children were attentive. Because of the nearness of the Reformation festival and the city of Wittenberg, I began to tell the children the history of the Reformation. In the afternoon

I travelled by a small boat to the first ship and examined the young people on the First Commandment. At the sixth hour we discovered the two principal towers of Wittenberg. The men helped with rowing so that we might reach them before sunset. The time of the Reformation stood vividly before me in spirit. A holy ground upon which Luther and so many pious people had walked. I waited until last. Those who preceded me had met Deacon Luther (as he afterwards identified himself) before the gate and were led by him through the city and shown the exterior items of interest. As I came to the Castle church, I met the whole group with Mr. Deacon Luther at their head. I was told that the King of Prussia had ordered a search for Luther's descendants and when one was found in the vicinity of Erfurt, he was allowed to study theology and then installed in Wittenberg. The union, against which Luther strove so mightily, was unfortunately accepted by this, his physical descendant. He is, therefore, a Luther, but not a Lutheran. As it became dark, it was to be feared that we would not be able to see any more. Solely through the efforts of Mr. Estel, a Wittenberger by birth, did we yet come into Luther's sitting room. Here the old stove, the old windows, table, chair, were still to be seen, which at one time had served the sainted Luther; also a cross and needlework of Luther's wife; a lecturing desk with much carving and a picture representing Christ, with the legend: sola fidei (by faith alone). In the visitors' book in Dr. Luther's room I wrote: "On the 22 October, 1838, some Lutherans emigrating from Saxony to America for the sake of the old Lutheran faith visited this room of the sainted Dr. Luther!" Thereafter followed our names."

"24 October. Early catechization on the Third Commandment on our ship in the afternoon, on the Second on the other ship."

"25 October. Morning devotion. Catechization on the Fourth Commandment. The history of Luther's life. Arrival in Magdeburg, where we visited the wonderful cathedral, in which at one time those who had been expelled because of the unionistic Interim testified to the one faith, but where since 1830 united church services are being held. Many monuments had been taken out. Generally speaking, the white walls and new chairs did not suit the building. In the afternoon a member of the separated Lutheran congregation located here, Mr. Gram, a master tailor, visited me. He remained on the ship as we passed through the locks. He shared with me a letter from Pastor Grabau, who is imprisoned at this time in Heiligenstadt, but who has already applied to the government for permission to emigrate. About 40 people assist one another and have a furnished prayer chamber. We spoke about the present time, the great decline, the thousandfold dangers, about the ministry and its importance, about emigration, about the Rev. Mr. Stephan, about the approaching judgment of God. They were all resolved to forsake Europe. Before we went our separate ways, I had to pray for a speedy deliverance. The Rev. Mr. Keyl and a Captain von Rohr had also looked them up. The latter had thereupon travelled to Hamburg with the Rev. Mr. (O.W.) Walther."

"26 October. Morning devotion, catechization on the Fifth Commandment, the life of Luther. On the other ship catechization on the Third Commandment. After I had spent some time on the top deck, a stomach-ache overtook me."

"27 October. In the morning catechization on the Sixth Commandment. At noon in Wittenberg where the visitation went well. Feeling unwell, I laid myself down on the bed. A fever came. I thought about my death, especially since, as often as I fell asleep, my dreams pointed to my death. It was stated in Latin: 'Sincere penitence over the years that have passed without fruit. The most fervent prayers for grace. The Apostles' Creed which I thought through frequently affords me the greatest comfort. I desire nothing more fervently than to be united with my ever-loving God.'"

"28 October. At evening we landed in the vicinity of Danitz, from which a good physician was brought, who prescribed opium for me and pronounced the illness as not dangerous. Nevertheless, I thought of nothing but death and I only wished to die in faith. Undoubtedly my regret that I should die already now was due to the will of the old evil foe."

"29 October. It goes somewhat better. Tenz my faithful nurse. Mr. Estel took care of the devotional exercises."

"30 October. Arrival in Harburg."

"31 October. The physician advised me to go to a hotel."

"1 November. In the Swan Hotel. Here I tried to put all distractions from my mind and to occupy myself only with godly things. This also I succeeded in doing through the grace of God."

"2 November. I wrote to the Rev. Mr. H. Walther of my situation saying that I longed for Christian community and soul care and had only one wish, at the least to come as far as Bremen. In the afternoon a conversation with N.N. concerning his two oldest children, particularly the daughter, whom I earnestly admonished in the presence of the father regarding her passing intimate association with the helmsman. She was deeply moved and promised improvement. Several came and bade farewell with heartfelt sympathy and the wish that I might be able to follow soon."

"3 November. Relapse. Mr. Staerzel, whom I reluctantly released, explained that everything had been taken care of and that he could do nothing more. At this time I considered the possibility of having to remain either here or in Hamburg this winter."

"4 November. Sunday. I edified myself with the sermon and the Word of God, was quiet in mind, supported by the will of God."

"5 November. Today I received a letter from M. Wege, which was very comforting to me, and the book of Mr. Heine in Hamburg, 'The Mission

Leading Toward Union" with which I busied myself this day. The book is penetrating and contains good citations. M. Wege wrote me that I must be in Bremen on the 7th huj. at the very latest."

"6 November. Departure from Harburg for Bremen. The penitential psalms were my refreshment on the way. Stayed overnight at Ottersberg."

"7 November. Early on the continuation of the journey fresh and lively. Joy and thanksgiving toward God that He brought my expectation and thought so far again. I felt the holy joy of faith which rests in Christ. About 2 o'clock arrival in Bremen."

So far the account of the journey.

As great as Buenger's joy was to meet his own here, so overwhelming was the news for him that his mother, so deeply beloved, had been taken into custody upon her arrival in Bremerhaven, on the false charge of having led away two orphaned children without the consent of their guardians. The fact was that the children had been brought with at least the unspoken consent of the grandparents, by a close relative into the travel group of Buenger's mother when she was already on the way..

As indescribably painful as it was for our Buenger to have to remain behind when the last two ships of the Saxon emigration society finally embarked on the 17th of November, he nevertheless recognized it as his sacred duty not to forsake his dear mother in her great distress and, with two of his sisters, to obtain her freedom. But since he still continued to ail, he was extended a great reassurance in that a young Christian man by the name of Kohtz agreed to remain behind with him. Indeed, until the hour of departure of the last ship he had, through continual fervent prayer to God still hoped that his dear mother would be exonerated from the police charge under which she stood and that together with her and in fellowship with his companions in the faith he could still leave. But this hope was not realized. Sick himself in body, filled with premonitions of an early death, and wrestling with himself

over God's help, he had the difficult task of upholding his dear mother in her severe distresses through daily encouragement from the Word of God. However, behold! On the 11th of December, the anniversary of the day his father died, the order of the Saxon court finally arrived at the magistrate in Bremerhaven to the end that "the widowed wife of Pastor Buenger" should be set free. On that particular day Buenger was just conducting the morning devotion. There was a hasty knocking at the door. The mother, thinking that she was about to be surprised again by a bailiff, fled terrified into the adjacent room. He who entered, however, brought notification in writing of the release. "Deliverance! Deliverance!" one joyfully called to her who had been called from her room. Buenger writes of this moment in his diary.

"Mother is beside herself with joy, falls immediately to her knees and praises and thanks God in a loud voice. We join her in her thanksgiving, but are repeatedly disturbed by congratulators, who at once appeared." So they hurriedly prepared themselves for leave taking and chose the ship "Constitution" for the crossing to America, i.e., to New York, departing in the name of the Lord God on 21. December.

The journey across the ocean, even though in the midst of a cold winter, progressed fortunately, generally speaking. Under the date "the 18th of February 1839", as Buenger arrived in New York with his company, he wrote in his diary, "Truly, as I saw New York lie before us, my joy was as great as that of Columbus and his company when they saw the coast of the Island of Guanahani. How the kind God has put to shame my unbelief in that I continually doubted whether I too would be fortunate enough to arrive!"

It was a tremendous blessing for our Buenger and those belonging to him that at that time a group of loyal Lutherans were located in New York,

who had already earlier emigrated to America from Berlin upon the advice of Pastor Stephan. Provided with letters of introduction to them, Buenger and those who belonged to him found the most friendly and loving reception and provision among them. Not only had these Lutherans rented a large, spacious room for conducting reading services and furnished it as a chapel, but also through their energetic and spirited witness they had won for the Lutheran truth and church quite a small congregation with a mission pastor who had gathered them together. When Buenger for the first time was present at the reading service of this small congregation, he wrote in his diary: "How overcome I was with joy when loudly and fervently the song, 'O Holy Trinity' was sounded. I could not stem the tears of joy at finding myself over here in this land, where a man was allowed in freedom to serve his God according to his Word. Possibly a hundred persons were present, all of whom gave the impression of hearing God's Word, of singing and of praying with heartfelt devotion. I received thereby a deep impression of the presence of God's grace and was thereby awakened to call upon God most fervently for the salvation of my own soul."

From the beginning it had been the intention of the so-called "Berliners" in New York to join themselves to the Saxon Lutheran emigration when they arrived in America, and to settle at the same place where they would. It is true that now the question was suggested from St. Louis whether it would not be advisable that the congregation remain in New York and call one of the emigrating Saxon pastors. But Pastor Stephan finally decided that also the New York congregation might come to Missouri in the spring of the year 1839. Thereupon it was proposed that our Buenger lead the church services at least until the

transmigration to Missouri. At this he suggested in sincere humility that this was something unsuitable for him as an inexperienced candidate. He promised only to interest himself in the children and occupied the time of his residence in New York in part in theological studies, in part in learning the English language.

When finally the New York congregation, consisting of around a hundred souls, started for Missouri, Buenger and those belonging to him joined them. His arrival at the place of settlement in Perry County in the State of Missouri (located about 100 miles south of St. Louis on the Mississippi) followed soon after Pentecost 1839.

No sooner had Buenger set foot on the new settlement when he experienced the most dreadful disappointment of his entire life. Up to this time he had adhered to Stephan as his spiritual father and advisor without any deceit but with a truly childlike love and honor. Now he had to hear with horror that in the meantime things had been revealed which made it necessary for the honor of God and the salvation of many souls to relieve Stephan of his office and remove him from the congregation, which had followed him like a second Moses from their fatherland to this distant foreign country.

All the many fine hopes, with which also our Buenger had emigrated, were now not only dissolved in one short moment like empty dream pictures before the eyes of his soul, but there was now set before his soul also the fearful picture of a future filled with great spiritual and bodily distress. Nevertheless, as great as the trust had been with which he had adhered to Stephan up to this time, the person of Stephan was not--praise God! the foundation of his hope. That was nothing else than the Word of God and the grace of God in Christ. So then he did not now despair. Yes, just at this time when God, so to speak, had torn the false supports from

his hands with power, our Buenger forced his way through to a greater joyfulness of faith before the others. Although he was a member and, as the oldest son of the family, the head of a large family in a manner of speaking, not for a moment did the firm confidence leave him that God, after having led them all to this point so wonderfully, would not also fulfill this gloriously. The question of little faith, "How can one feed these men with bread here in the desert?" (Mark 8:4) appears never to have come into his soul, even though most of them at that time really found themselves in a forest wasteland.

His next oldest brother, a young medical man (Dr. Ernest Buenger who now lives in Altenberg) found, as the climatic illnesses threw always more of the new settlers upon the sickbed, only too much work and offered the entire scanty results of his efforts for the needy support of his mother and brothers and sisters. Our Frederick Buenger, however, provided them not only with the bread of life, with instruction, encouragement, and comfort from the Word of God, but he, a practical genius hardly without equal, with his other brothers (Theodore and Hermann) and sisters, laid a vigorous hand to the work of establishing a homestead for the family as quickly as possible before the winter set in. In a short time then the new home, comfortably furnished, stood there quite ready, nicer, in the thoughts of its residents, than all kings' castles. The little house still stands there, a monument to the care of a heavenly Father for a pious, fatherless family. It is true that sometimes a not unimportant need for daily bread in the literal sense of the word arose. Just as also at one time the house of the desperately poor widow of Zarepath became a shelter for a forsaken one (1 Kings 17:8-24), so also the little house of the Buenger's was a cozy asylum for a forsaken orphan boy.

(We cannot forbear to share here a noteworthy incident which Mr. P. Koesterling in his book, "Emigration of the Saxon Lutherans", page 32, has already communicated without mentioning names. One reads there, namely, the following: "The family of a pastor's widow, (the Buengers)

comprised of eight people, one day had not a single piece of bread to eat, and also did not know where they could get flour for baking. As the hunger became great one of the children said to the other: 'I once heard that one can eat roasted kernels of corn. Let's try it.' No sooner said than done. They then filled their pockets with the roasted kernels of Indian corn, and the table was set for them. But at that the bright tears of sadness flowed down the cheeks of the dear widow. When now one of the children, disturbed, said: 'One would not be able to work hard for long with such a miserable fare', the other comfortingly responded she not only did not wish to despair, but entrusted herself to God's gracious help, who would once again give them bread. And as they believed, so it happened to them. For behold! still on that very day an English speaking man came with a horse, carrying a sack of flour. He rode up to the house of the widow and asked whether she needed flour for bread. Naturally he was answered with a 'Yes', but at the same time it was added that at the moment, unfortunately, no money to pay for it was at hand. But should he wish to leave the flour, he would soon justly receive his payment for it. This promise was without doubt meant sincerely, for the family that expressed it was an honorable, pious one. And yet the flour was never paid for. Why not? you will ask. Because the man, who was a good example for this pious family in the time of distress, was never seen again. For despite every inquiry it could never be learned where he came from or whither he went. We, however, say:

The God of old still lives;
He careth for us day and night
All things are governed by His might!)

There was at that time a sufficient storehouse of teaching abilities for the emigrating congregation on hand for a longer succession of years among the great number of accompanying pastors and theological candidates. Nevertheless the three candidates staying at this time in Perry County, Brohm, Fuerbringer, and Buenger, perceived it as their duty not to allow the establishment of an Institution for the education and development of orthodox teachers and pastors idly and careless for the future. The care for the future of their children with respect to church and school had been for the Saxon Lutherans precisely the strongest motive for their emigration to America. As exceedingly scanty as the procurement of treasured bread for the poor body proceeded from one day to the next, nevertheless, care for the bread of the soul remained the principal concern and the principal work for one holding fast to the Word of the Lord: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or,

What shall we drink? or What shall we wear?, but seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well." (Matt.6: 31-33)

With great joy those pastors found in Perry County at that time Loeber, Kell, and Walther went along with the younger men in the plan for establishing a so-called college as the next priority and promised their active assistance. Because of the deficiency of room existing within the settlement just coming into being (after the purchase of 6 acres of land effected by Brohm, Fuerbringer, Buenger, and Walther), the first and most urgent need was naturally the erection of a small cabin for the proposed educational institution. Indeed, some members of the congregation were now found who, as hard as it might be to wrestle for their own daily necessities, nevertheless immediately promised their help with the construction. And what they promised they faithfully delivered, as much as they were able. Most of the work, however, the beloved candidates had to do themselves. And here it was our Buenger who outdid all the others when it was now time to cut down trees, to saw and hew logs, to split fence rails, to remove stumps, to root out underbrush and weeds, to prepare the ground for its purpose, to put the prepared material finally together, and other things in like manner. The college well which still exists, Buenger dug all by himself. From the congregation that remained behind in St. Louis, to which O.H. Walther the Elder had been called, flowed the small amount of money which was indispensably necessary for the purchase of materials that the primeval forest did not offer. When the log cabin finally stood there and was dedicated, there was a joy whose fervor only those could fully show who had been in sympathy with it.

(Instruction was thereupon begun with seven boys. [These boys included, among others, the present President Biltz, Pastor Mueller in Chester, Illinois, and Pastor Loeber, Sr. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.])

And so the foundation was laid for the later Concordia College and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis to which the Institution was removed in 1850 after it had been turned over to the Synod of Missouri, etc.

(In Perry County at the beginning girls were also given advanced instruction in the college. There were four of them. This instruction was only given by Buenger.)

Shortly after the opening of the college our Buenger was called by the congregation in St. Louis as teacher in their school. This was after Candidate L. Geyer (now pastor in Texas), who had until now directed the school in St. Louis, had followed another call.

(In the Saxon Lutheran congregations it was the rule that the teaching ministry was always set up at the same time as the preaching ministry. A school was opened in St. Louis just a few days after the arrival of the first group of the emigration society. The same thing happened also in all the other congregations in Perry County. If no individual teacher was able to be installed, it was self understood that the pastor took over the teaching ministry together with the preaching ministry and administered both according to his abilities.)

It was in July 1841 that Buenger moved to St. Louis. Regarding his ability as the teacher there the sainted Director Lindemann has left behind notes which we allow ourselves to insert here. These read as follows:

"At that time the congregation in St. Louis occupied neither a church nor a school building. In a house on Poplar Street, located between First and Second Streets, the pastor lived on the second floor and the school was conducted below. The school room was at the same time the living quarters of the teacher.

Under Buenger's leadership the school soon prospered. Because he bestirred himself to really give the children something, and exercised particular diligence to prepare the beginners as soon as possible to meet the qualifications of following the lessons with profit, the school was given a most favorable reception. Recognizing that the children there were not only taught

well but were also accustomed to excellent discipline, many parents not belonging to the Lutheran congregation also sent their children to the school.

The German radicals had also established a school in St. Louis at that time. Its teacher was a German student, who had indeed studied law in Leipzig but who nevertheless did not know how to impart to his students the most necessary elementary perceptions. He expressed himself in lofty speech and boasted a great deal regarding the scientific training that he imparted to the children. For this he was paid 600 dollars annually. His children had to pay 1 dollar tuition per month, but for that they learned extremely little. After this school had existed for about two years, it broke up completely. The majority of the children then came to Buenger in the Lutheran school.

He had really only room at the very most for fifty students (the teacher's bed and his other household goods took away a not insignificant portion of the narrow room), but frequently eighty were present. Then a part of them had to take their place on the porch outside and a part on the stairway leading up to the pastor's dwelling above. On these steps they sat crowded closely to one another. So excellent had the reputation of the school become that even the "evangelical" Pastor Wall sent his foster child to it.

The subjects which were taught in this school were Bible History, Catechism, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, popular knowledge, and some English language. The almost complete lack of suitable school books at that time occasioned great distress. The primer which Buenger used was printed in St. Louis (and actually in the office of the "Advertiser of the West", at that time edited by Weber) and consisted of at most twelve pages, to which was also attached as an appendix a "Small German Grammar". The religious instruction was carried on naturally from Luther's Small Catechism. This in most instances was purchased by the parents not belonging to the "Saxon congregation", as one already then used to call them. For although these did not

send their children to school on account of the religious instruction they, nevertheless, had to accommodate themselves to the arrangement from which no one was exempted. The songs which should be practiced and learned had to be copied down for the most part since song books were lacking. Only later a friend in Germany gave a chestfull of song books which were now introduced. They were printed in Frankfurt am Main and bore the title "Best Spiritual Songs". At the beginning only the New Testament served as a reader. Later Buenger in his need bought for this purpose a selection of the best tracts, published by the American Tract Society and available at a small price.

In his instruction he always followed the rule that all classes would be busy with the same subject at the same time. If, for example, it was reading, all read. While the smallest ones studied the first spelling lessons, the remaining groups practiced their reading lesson. It went similarly in all hours.

At first Mr. B. could not quite manage school discipline. He did not wish to punish the small children on account of their tiresome chattering and for that reason they chattered to their heart's content. What should he now do? Since on Wednesday afternoons he had no school, he used this time to visit the English schools and to learn to know their instruction. He found the greatest quiet and order everywhere during the instruction. He soon discovered the secret. He saw how the children in these schools were trained, exercised, and perfected in good discipline. From what he saw, B. appropriated a great deal, and so he also learned how to direct a large school with few words. It went continually better with respect to discipline. The children did everything with a brief command. Order and quiet moved into the school.

In the second year the number of children increased so greatly, that it became necessary to move into a larger school room. It was also located on Poplar Street, between Third and Fourth Streets.

As a salary the school-teaching candidate for the holy ministry received 15 dollars from the congregation every month. This was raised in part through tuition (each child of the congregation paid 5 cents a week); in part through the deposits every Sunday in the collection plate ("Klingelbeutel"), namely, in basins held at the church door. The "foreign" children had to pay 50 cents every month as tuition. At the beginning B. also received this. Later, however, he delivered it to the congregational treasury, since his monthly salary had been raised to \$25.

At this time the Lutheran ("Saxon") congregation did not occupy its own church, but conducted their meetings, church services, etc., in the Episcopal Church. When, however, the property owners gave notice against further joint use, the Lutherans undertook the construction of their own church. It was erected on Lombard St., dedicated on the second Sunday in Advent 1842, and called "Trinity Church".

(Many members of Synod also outside St. Louis have not only known of this church, but have also attended church services and synodical meetings there.)

The spacious basement beneath it was designated as the school room and Mr. B. joyfully took possession of it. Here the number of students increased to such a degree that soon 150 to 160 were found there. With great energy and also with visible success Mr. B. worked with this considerable flock of the lambs of Christ.

The congregation, which had spread itself over the entire city, and which also wished to fulfill its calling to carry on mission work among the other Germans, now earnestly considered establishing a second school in a more northerly part of the city. It was opened in December 1844 "in St. Louis Gardens" (on Wash and 8th Street). Theodore C. Buenger, the younger brother of our candidate, was placed as teacher in this new school after passing a public examination successfully.

(In Germany he had attended a gymnasium [the Holy Cross School in Dresden] and had gotten as far as Tertia at the time of the emigration. In St. Louis he received instruction in preparation for the office of school teacher from his brother and from Pastor Walther, the Younger.)

He received the office of cantor in the congregation at the same time, a position which until now had been held by a member of the congregation, Mr. C.M. Grosse.

In that same year Mr. Friedrich Buenger was also called to the office of the ministry. At first the congregation in St. Louis appointed him as assistant pastor with a monthly salary of \$24 and with the obligation of administering the instruction in the upper class together with a second teacher. (After the death of Pastor O.H. Walther on the 21 January 1841, the congregation called his younger brother into the vacant office, who entered upon it on Jubilate Sunday of that same year.) At the same time the tireless Buenger also took over the care of a small country congregation. At that time a congregation was located on the Bonhomme highway in St. Louis County, which until then had been served by a United Pastor Nollau. They renounced him and called Mr. B. as their pastor. From that time on he visited them every fourteen days. Some of the people brought a horse to him in the city and tethered it right before the school. As soon then as the instruction was over on Friday, he swung himself upon his steed and trotted out to his congregation. In order to learn to know the individual families better, he never lodged twice in one and the same house. This was done without creating hardship. On Saturday school was held. What he had taken through with the children on that day he would ask them about on the following Sunday in the church service catechization. For the parents it was a great joy every time to hear how well and joyfully the children were able to answer. Before B. dismissed the children, he gave them new lessons which they diligently learned and always knew well when

he returned. God also blessed his labor to the extent that the small congregation was able to build a small church which was dedicated on the 14th of June 1846. (Cf. Lutheraner, Vol. 11, p. 91).

In the year 1847 a particular congregational district was created in that northerly part of St. Louis. They now called Mr. Friederich Buenger as their own pastor, and for this reason he was required to give up the teaching ministry that had become so dear to him. In this "Immanuel District" whose limits were geographically set apart from the "Trinity District", Pastor Buenger alone had the pastoral care. But he exchanged pulpits with the pastor of the other district so that all members would be reminded that, as before, they were building only one congregation.

On the 27th of February 1848 the new Immanuel Church (on the southeast corner of 11th Street and Franklin Avenue) was festively dedicated."

So far the notes of the sainted Director Lindemann.

So we have led our Buenger to the position in which he faithfully served his Lord and Savior for 35 uninterrupted years until his blessed death. His congregation supplied him with help for only a very short time as it increased from year to year and he became President of the Western District of our Synod in the year 1863. In July of the year 1865 he received an assistant. When he was ordained in the church on the Third Sunday after Trinity, Buenger himself preached the ordination sermon on the basis of 1 Tim. 4:11-16, "On the Proper Conduct of One Ordained to the Preaching Ministry", (1) in view of the teaching which he carries on; (2) in view of the way of life which he follows; (3) in view of the constancy which he demonstrates in it; and (4) in view of the purpose which he should keep before his eyes. Unfortunately, because of a sunstroke, he soon had to terminate the ministry of his assistant, whereupon Buenger again managed his ministry of his Immanuel congregation alone, and that until his death.

On the Saturday before the second Sunday in Advent, the 9th of December 1865, he experienced the great heartache of seeing his dearly beloved Immanuel Church destroyed by fire while he was at home sick with a cold and a fever. Only a few days before, on December 3, 1865, the large new Trinity Church had been dedicated. On the third Sunday in Advent he held a so-called Fire Sermon, in which, on the basis of Jer. 60:10, he answered the question, "What does the Lord God wish to say to us through the burning of our church?" Answer: 1. In my anger I have broken you; 2. In my grace I have had mercy upon you. Since the basement of the church, which until now had been used only for the school, had remained untouched by the fire, it was quickly set up for the purpose of worship gatherings. It was used for the first time on the Sunday after Christmas and thereafter until the dedication of the new Immanuel Church which first occurred on Laetare Sunday, the 22nd of March 1868.

(This new Immanuel Church at Morgan and 16th St., constructed in Gothic style, is 137 feet long and 64 feet wide. The tower has a height of 209 feet. It can comfortably seat 1,500 people, hold twice as many people as the old church. The cost was \$105,537, including the property and the erection of a school building of four classrooms at the same place. And all this with a congregation of only 160 voting members.)

At this time let us provide you with some brief accounts of our Buenger as pastor. In the first place the doctrine which he as pastor ever and always followed, was no other than the pure, clear doctrine of our dear evangelical Lutheran Church. Certainly in the first years after his awakening he, like almost all with whom he at that time fostered relationship, especially learned, apart from his purely scientific studies and from the reading of the Book of Concord, to progress in Christian understanding. He diligently studied strongly pietistic writings almost exclusively. Only later was it principally in Luther's and Brenz' writings that he likewise sought growth in basic theological knowledge, as well as for the edification of his own soul. Above all, the writings of those theologians who expressed themselves in a freer form

attracted him more than those who used a stronger systematic approach, such as Gerhard, Quenstedt, and others. But not only did he know the pure doctrine very well but he esteemed it also as a greater treasure than all the treasures of this world. He was held captive by his conscience never to forsake it by a hair's breadth, and hated all false doctrine like the devil himself. What was said at the conclusion of the documents which had been placed in the cornerstone of the first Immanuel Church corresponded completely with Buenger's thinking, namely, the words: "The Lord help that in this church His pure word may be proclaimed to His glory and the deliverance and edification of many souls. Yes, and that also, when this cornerstone is opened, faithful confessors of the pure doctrine, as it is contained in the public confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, may be found who will read this to their encouragement. Before Rationalism, Enthusiasm, false Lutheranism be preached in this church, the builders certainly would that God might rather destroy this church by fire, storm or earthquake."

For Buenger had experienced in living fashion and to his own great damage in his earlier, severe distress of soul and spiritual battle over many years, what a soul-imperilling poison every false doctrine is, also that which is apparently least influential for the inner and outward Christian life. The more in general he was strengthened in the faith that the writings of the prophets and apostles were the word of the truly living God Himself, the more anxious he was to remain steadfast in them. The greater also was his reluctance to incorporate empty human learning and to convert the clear word of the Scripture to please blind human understanding and the perverse human heart.

It was apparent that this saying of the Lord was buried deeply in his soul: Is. 66:2: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word."

As inclined as he usually was to judge his neighbor charitably, and in accordance with love to believe everything and to hope everything, and as kindly disposed as he was in meeting with members of false churches and with ministers of the sects, so decisively and earnestly did he witness to their departure from the clear Word of God. Above all, he was ever and always filled with a truly burning zeal against the anti-Christian papacy. That familiar quotation, which Luther once left behind to the assembled Lutherans as his last testament in the year 1537, as he was brought away deathly ill from Schmalkalden:

"May God fill you with hatred against the Pope." [Deus vos impleat odio Papae), this word Buenger also inherited from Luther and it had penetrated deeply into his heart and conscience. When he was once reminded in jest by a friend of Luther's warning, not to run through the believing children of God even though there are bears among them (cf. Luther's Letter on Anabaptism, Vol. XVII, 2649), our Buenger replied similarly in jest, "So now what? One may not spare the Roman bears, even though a believing brother, who is stuck beneath him, also receives a small prick at the same time!" Buenger prepared himself for his sermons with great conscientiousness, with meditation and looking up passages, combined with the most fervent prayer to God. As a rule he wrote them word for word and memorized them. He was, to be sure, no professional orator, yet he always observed a good, logical order. Indeed, all his sermons were throughout of an evangelical character. Yet he did not allow thereby the thunder of the law to fall, but rebuked all ungodly ways of the rich as well as the poor fearlessly and with great earnestness. Each of his sermons was practical and to a high degree popular and completely understandable, also for the most simple. Although nothing really offensive occurred, he was able to bring matters into the pulpit which another would not dare to mention. Altogether he exhibited a manner so suitable, so naive in his total personality, that no one could become aggravated, while sometimes one could

hardly suppress laughter. Not seldom was he so loud in his burning zeal that it took strong nerves to follow him quietly. He was very dissatisfied with himself in this respect, and resolved again and again to speak more quietly. But ever and again his natural disposition pulled him back once more to letting such sentences sound forth in trumpet tones just when he wanted to declaim more temperately in order to make a greater impression. Nevertheless, his sermons as a rule were rich in godly thoughts and gripped the heart. As far as his preaching is concerned, to characterize him briefly we would like to call him the American, Lutheran Valerius Herberger.

With respect to the private cure of souls, he was as active therein as the size of his parish allowed. Not only did he hurry by day or by night to the sick bed and the death bed when called, but also diligently made unsolicited house calls whenever he learned that one of the sheep of his flock required spiritual or physical assistance. He took a truly fatherly interest in the confirmed youth and made himself acquainted with their walk and way of life. He hunted up the young men and young women when they missed their way and spoke to them in the most friendly and heartfelt manner. He gave them counsel and comfort, but also rebuked them sharply when it seemed necessary to him. For this he was beloved of them like a father, feared, and yet honored.

He took a great interest in drawing and attracting the confirmed youth into visiting the Catechism examinations held in the church every second Sunday afternoon and in making these occasions as profitable as possible. Holding in his hand the list of young men and women obliged to attend, with every question he called on one of them by name and, as often as one of them failed to answer, he made a black mark so that at communion announcement or some other opportunity he could ask the absentee the reason for his absence. When he catechized he did not move around but remained standing at the altar in order to induce a loud answer. The questions which he asked were always easy,

Whoever answered well to a certain extent would be praised for that reason and whoever answered incorrectly would be corrected in friendly fashion. Those who peeked into their "Dietrich" before they answered were not censured. The examination was more like a friendly conversation, seasoned with all kinds of practical applications and stories, than like an examination. So then, not only most of those who were obligated according to congregational resolution came with hearty willingness to the so-called "Children Instruction", but also the adults participated almost unanimously.

He used the communion announcement, as much as time allowed him, to work most faithfully with souls. By no means did it satisfy him only to keep the faithful members of the congregation, but it was his most zealous concern to prove himself a faithful shepherd to each soul, to instruct the ignorant, to bring the impenitent to repentance, to strengthen the weak, to comfort those afflicted and tempted by distress, to warn those standing in danger, to recall those who had chosen a false way, to raise the fallen again, in a word, to be a faithful pastor and cure of souls for all.

His mind in this regard is shown, among others, by the prayers which he wrote on the very first pages of his pastoral "diary" and which, without doubt, he brought before God again and ever again. At least one of them ought to find a place here. It reads as follows:

"O dear God, gracious Father, you have called me as a preacher of your saving Word and you know that I do not have the power to deal worthily with your secrets without your divine help and support. Therefore, I earnestly pray you that you would give me your Holy Spirit, that He may lead, guide and rule me that in my calling I may not think, speak, undertake, or do anything except that which redounds, O Lord, to your praise and glory and to the benefit and comfort of those souls entrusted to me. Protect me, gracious God, from the father of lies, who is a sworn

enemy of the holy ministry, that I may indeed teach nothing else but your Word, which alone brings with it the truth and the life. Grant that I may also lead such a life, that my dear Christians are not aggravated by it, but are greatly improved, and that I may never be a cause for the blaspheming of your holy, gracious Word by the unbelievers. But especially do I ask you, my Lord and my God, that you would graciously fulfill and validate your gracious, fatherly and comforting promise, which you allowed to be revealed through your servant Isalah, namely, that your Holy Word, which proceeds out of your mouth, might not return void, but accomplish that which pleases you and prosper him to whom you send it, at this very time (this word Buenger himself underlined) to me, your servant, and at the same time to those who will hear it; also that my preaching may redound, Lord God, to your praise and thanksgiving, and also to the improvement of my life and all those who hear me, to the assurance of our weak consciences, to the strengthening of our faith and finally to the healing and salvation of all our souls; through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, our Lord. Amen."

But the most splendid thing about this great faithfulness as pastor and cure of souls was this, that our esteemed Buenger in his sincere humility regarded himself as the most unfaithful pastor, something to which this writer can testify to the glory of God. For he was his father confessor and heard his private confession regularly so that he might receive that private absolution so dear to him.

The government of the congregation was of a truly evangelical character. His guiding star for this was the Word of the Lord: "One is your Master, even Christ", as also the apostolic utterances, "Not that we would be Lords over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy; for you stand in faith. We preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ, that He is Lord, we, however, His slaves for

Jesus' sake. I say nothing, that I command something. Not as those who rule over the people, but become examples of the flock. Judge ye what I say. Everything is yours. You are the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the peculiar people, that you should proclaim the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."

Also Buenger had at one time, before he came to America, clung to a false, romanizing theory of the ministry. But at this time, after his eyes were opened by the grace of God, he hated to the bottom of his soul all pride of the ministry and all rulership of the priest. To that end he rejected everything which he could not prove from the Word of God, for example, foisting compliance by means of a pretended authority of the ministry and requiring obedience according to the fourth commandment in the so-called intermediate things (adiaphora), i.e., things neither commanded nor forbidden. Yet in no way did he play the role of puppet in the congregation. As little as he wished to rule, so little did he also wish to let himself be ruled over. He did not let himself be made a slave of men and flattered no one. What he recognized as advisable, he advocated with great determination. Yes, sanguine of temperament as he was, in his zeal for the good, he sometimes did too much. But here he also allowed himself to be easily appeased and was prepared to sincerely correct himself immediately upon being admonished. As little then as his passing over-zealousness turned the congregation members to offense, for they knew that this came from a faithful heart, so little as often as he took back an expression, did this weaken his reputation and the great confidence which he enjoyed, as much in his district congregation as in the whole congregation.

He administered the office of school inspector with great love. He continually pondered over ways of bringing the school to the attention of the congregation in every connection. He frequently consulted with his teachers

about this, designed the lesson plans with them, and considered with as great earnestness as with proficient technical knowledge how to organize the different classes in such a way that each teacher always worked hand-in-hand with the other. So then, under his direction the most splendid success obtained through excellent teachers, with whom he stood in a sincere, brotherly Christian relationship that was never marred.

As Buenger was the founder of the young men's and young women's societies in this place, so with great love he also took care of the one located in his district congregation. In our seductive metropolis he sought, as much as he was able, to make these societies into institutions for the preservation of their members in the true faith and a godly life and instruments for furthering the things of the Kingdom of God. A great number of college students, education (teacher-training) students, and theological students have the generous support of these young men's and young women's societies to thank for their education, not to mention other works of Christian love which were carried out by them.

In the year 1863 Buenger became president of what was then the largest district of the Synod of Missouri, etc., the Western District. He remained president until the year 1874 when his constantly growing congregation laid an earnest protest before the Synod opposing his continuance in this time-consuming office. Our Buenger considered himself entirely unfit for such an important, difficult, and demanding position. As soon as he undertook it, he began a special diary in which he always noted in advance exactly what as president he had to concern himself with at specific times and in which he wrote down his presidential experiences. This diary begins in this way: "INI. the 24th of October 1863. Elected as president of the Western District of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, etc., in Ft. Wayne by compulsion." That is also exactly as it happened. Opposing it himself with much vigor, he was truly

"Impressed" as president. But the latter occurred properly so. Buenger administered his presidential office not only with great conscientiousness and faithfulness, but also with great skill. Wherever his presence appeared to be necessary, there he hurried forthwith. In important cases he almost always succeeded in mediating between pastors and congregations. Always a ready counsellor and comforter of his brothers in the ministry, he also recognized it as excellent to influence the congregation that he visited to stand for the right and to awaken their confidence in their synodical affiliation. Even a blunt word the congregations could not take as evil from him, a man in whose whole conduct German honesty and Christian simplicity expressed itself. His only dislike was spiritually proud people.

We wish to verify with just one example how important Buenger understood it to associate with all kinds of people with whom he came into contact in his presidential travels and to enter into their questions. When Buenger found himself in the circle of a farm family, a guest explained to him that he was certainly a Lutheran, but at the same time he could not believe that little children could already believe, as the old Lutherans taught. Nor could anyone explain this, since no one was able to recollect having believed already as a small child. Whereupon Buenger answered: "Nothing is easier to explain than this. Indeed, you shall be able immediately to see this for yourself." With these words Buenger took her infant from the arms of the farmer's wife standing there and gave it to the questioner. But no sooner had he taken the child into his arms, when it became restless and cried pitifully. "Now, dear friend," said Buenger, "give the child back again to its mother." He did so, and, behold! the child was once again quiet. "Now then, tell me, my good man", Buenger asked, "How is it that the child, restless with you, when given back to the arms of its mother again became quiet at once?" And then he added,

"You see, my dear man, it comes from the fact that the child believes his mother but not you. Do you still wish to deny that children are able to believe?" From then on the questioner is said to have believed firmly in the faith of children.

Even before he was president, Buenger had lived and worked with his whole heart for the business of so-called inner missions. And so he now used his presidential office to carry it on more impressively. His presidential journeys were always at the same time mission journeys, in which he searched for settlements lacking the preaching of the Word of God and for scattered Lutherans living here and there. When he found such and had suggested to them meeting as a congregation, he did not rest until he had provided these forsaken people with the service of the Word. A great number of blossoming congregations, next to God, thank him for their origin and provision. The insight he gained that the immense field of inner missions in our west and in other places is capable of cultivation only where as many pupils as possible are brought to our institutions, led him to use every opportunity presented to him, especially his journeys, to win boys and young men for study. He seldom came home from a journey without having gained a group for this purpose. He was not satisfied only with the mere recruiting. If those recruited were too poor to be able to study at their own expense, he was untiring in inducing well-to-do and generous Christians, congregations, and societies to support them. He himself was always among the first supporters. As long as the public "high school" had not been established here in St. Louis, in which also the Latin language was offered, Buenger himself taught a long succession of boys in the elements of the Latin language. first. The purpose, first of all, was to test their ability and industry, and thereupon as circumstances permitted, to prepare them for entrance into the gymnasium.

As for the "Inner" so also our Buenger had a warmly beating heart for the "outer" mission to the heathen. So long as our Synod had a mission to the Indians, he promoted this work, as much as he always could. When this had to be given up for reasons not to be discussed here, no one truly grieved more sincerely than our Buenger. He never gave up the thought that this work, if in any way possible, must be taken up again. Toward the end of his sixtieth year he became acquainted with a missionary, who had served for three years in China but had given it up again for good reasons, and now carried on farming in Missouri. Since the missionary showed himself to be an honest Christian and a faithful Lutheran, Buenger saw in this a divine omen to begin a mission in God's name next among the heathen Chinese residing in St. Louis. In the year 1874 he brought this matter before the convention of the Synod. To his joy they accepted the idea of carrying on a Chinese mission in St. Louis and named a committee with our Buenger as its chairman. Even though he now carried on this work with fiery zeal,^{as} he did everything which he undertook in faith and love, and the missionary also found a promising entry among the Chinese located there, yet this god-pleasing work came to an end through the ensuing blessed death of the missionary. It was with even greater zeal that Buenger now took on the matter of negro missions, at whose head he was subsequently placed and whose affairs he served with great faithfulness as chairman of the appointed commission until his death.

Observed also from the administration of his synodical office, there has been hardly a more lively member of our Synod than our Buenger. He saw every objective of the Synod as his own. To that end the only reason for him not to attend a synodical convention or a pastoral conference could be physical impossibility. He read the synodical publications with great

interest and he encouraged their circulation as much as he could. Although he did not see himself called upon to enter into the doctrinal battles of the Synod as a public participant, yet he did not remain any less unconcerned. Each new doctrinal battle was for him an urgent summons to new study of doctrine. Since he stood with the Synod upon a foundation of faith, after earnest studies had been made of the matter which had at that time become controversial, he could never do otherwise than stand at the side of his synod with complete conviction. He then also represented its teaching with great resolution against friend and foe, privately and publicly. This was evident, among others, in relation to the doctrine of predestination, which had become controversial at this time. It can be plainly observed, above all in his diaries, that Buenger, despite his immense practical activity, still always sought and found time for the continuation of his theological studies. An actual demonstration of this is at hand in the excellent excerpts from various learned theological sources which are found in his day books as writings of edification.

(He never gave up the study of the Latin language and its use until his death. Quite regularly on his birthday or at other festive opportunities this writer would receive from him a Latin poem of congratulation.)

Our Buenger was the first within our Synod to whom the idea came to establish a Lutheran hospital and a Lutheran orphans' home.

The hospital was quietly opened by him in St. Louis in the name of God on December 1, 1858. After it had been in existence for a year he himself gave the following report of it in "Der Lutheraner":

"The necessity of having their own hospital was often felt in a right lively fashion by a great number of Lutherans in St. Louis. It was to be a place where sick fellow-believers and also other sick, led to us by the Lord, could be taken up and cared for physically and spiritually. It had happened repeatedly that isolated

sick Lutherans, who had first emigrated here or who came here from time to time from other places by reason of their employment, could find a reception only with difficulty in private homes and families. And precisely in their illness, when they most of all needed and desired brotherly community and soul-care, they had to be brought into hospitals where their brothers in the faith could visit them only infrequently, much less were able to wait upon and care for them.

"But an institution for the sick, even when one is able to begin it on a small scale, is not easy to bring into being. One desired only to rent a few rooms or a very small house. Neither a few rooms nor a small house was available. Everyone took offense that his house should be converted into an infirmary. As long as it stood it would be called an infirmary, it was said, and later it would be quite difficult to rent. Also, the neighborhood would not tolerate it. At the same time it was also difficult to find suitable persons to be nurses. Not every person who was willing to serve was also suited to it. For such a hospital, as ours should be, it was especially important that a physician be found who enjoyed common confidence and who was sincerely devoted to an institution that stood under the supervision of the church. The raising of the necessary monies should not even be mentioned, for something would gladly be brought together for such a benevolent purpose, especially from Christians. The dear Lord has wonderfully helped until now in all these and other difficulties. A member of the congregation volunteered to designate, without cost, two rooms of one of his suitable houses for the hospital and to rent the other two rooms cheaply for the same purpose, if they were used. Through this courage and joy were naturally awakened to take hold of the work. And added to this came the other principal incentive.

Just at this time an excellent physician was found within the congregation who enjoyed great confidence. He took hold of the matter of the hospital with great love and promised and rendered his services in the most unselfish fashion.

"A patient was already admitted to one of the rooms furnished for the indigent who, worthy of note, was a former Mormon, and there were as yet no real nurses. But just at this time the dear God led us to a family, who wished to give themselves to this ministry in Christian love. They were considered generally as suitable and have also turned out to be so until now. We must loudly confess to the glory of God: The Lord has been friendly to us and has prospered the work of our hands.

"Since it was considered good not to carry on the administration of the hospital as a specifically congregational matter, a temporary board of administration was assembled. They took into their hands the renovation of the house, the collection of monies, in short, the entire management of this institution. The young men's society as well as also the young women's society was invited to participate, in view of the fact that for the most part the unmarried people especially would make use of this institution. Both societies also readily participated. So then, the board of administration chose from among its members several collectors, who gathered a monthly contribution in specific districts of the congregation. These contributions were to be received only from such as were members of the Lutheran church, and on an individual basis. These then faithfully carried out this labor of love. Gifts for the furnishing of the house were generously presented by the esteemed women's societies and other members of the congregation.

In this way the matter of the hospital has been carried forward under the blessing of God now for more than a year already until the present time, as the attached reports of the physician and treasurer further testify.

"For the present we have three chambers, one for the family who waits upon the sick, one for men who are ill and one for women who are ill. That is sufficient to meet the need for now. But it is the wish of the board of administration and of many friends of the institution that we should expand the institution further and particularly erect a proper building. Such a hospital would include specific rooms for such as are afflicted with contagious diseases, rooms for the convalescents, bathrooms, and the like. It would also be very desirable to admit not only the curable ill, but also the incurable and chronically ill, the elderly poor comrades in the faith, and to be able to care for them until their end. For that purpose also a considerable legacy from a recently deceased dear brother in the faith, the late Ferdinand Rudloffs, has given us courage. If only more of the living and dying would do the same. If also the Lutheran congregations in the vicinity of St. Louis would kindly take an interest in us, for to some extent they have their young people in St. Louis. Then too, they are frequently unable to have a good physician close at hand and would like to bring many sick to this hospital. And so this intention would soon be realized, namely, to construct a proper building upon a suitable location, kindly deeded by one of the local congregations. May the Lord build it." (Cf. "Lutheraner" p. 80, XVI, p. 101f.)

And behold! The Lord did build it. Yes, He had already built it. In the year 1864 Buenger, firmly trusting in God's help, purchased two connected

two-story houses on Seventh St. In the vicinity of the Arsenal, for \$6,500. They had been built only four years previously, were elegantly furnished, and excellently suited for hospital purposes. Today they are still a blessed place of refuge for such sick as wish to have not only conscientious medical treatment but also loving nursing and the Christian care of soul. The houses were in such a condition that they seemed to be destined for a hospital already by the builder, whereas originally and actually they had been constructed for entirely other purposes. They included altogether (omitting the cellar and attic) 10 rooms and chambers with entry from two large, high halls and one bathroom, so that, not including the family of the house steward, 30 to 40 persons could be received in it and could find sufficient room. They stand back a few feet from the street. The courtyard is enclosed by an iron fence. In addition to the courtyard, planted with trees and shrubs, the houses are provided with two porches.

If Buenger had ended his report, as he looked back at the end of the first year of the hospital, upon the necessity of a proper building, with a sigh as already noted, "May the Lord build it!", so now four years later (1864) in relation to the dwelling just described he wrote: "The Lord Jesus has manifestly given us this building. May praise and thanks for it be said to Him from the bottom of our heart. He will also care for it graciously and kindly, that the purchase amount is collected through His Christians, who willingly contribute their share." And Buenger was not disappointed in his hope. Already in the year 1869, the last remaining debt upon the hospital in the amount of \$1,060 could be paid. Thereupon Buenger now began the immediate construction of a building in the rear for such sick as were suffering from contagious diseases. And so this beautiful work of faith and love increased from year to year. In the first year somewhere about 15 sick found shelter there, but the number rose to 152 in the year 1869.

Among others it was the students living here who enjoyed this great benefit.

Buenger was moved to lay the foundation of a Lutheran hospital not by the desire to be involved in many things, but by the distress which he saw before his eyes. Beginning in a small way, he entrusted himself to the guidance of God. He learned how God visibly prospered his work, undertaken in Christian simplicity, and crowned it from year to year with ever-greater blessing.

In similar fashion the plan for an orphan's home "for the little children of Jesus" proceeded. This, next to God, owes its establishment likewise to our Buenger. He himself tells in the following way how he came to begin the orphans' home in the year 1865:

"A sick soldier, who lay in a local military hospital, requested the maintenance of his ten-year old son, who had no home after the death of his mother and who would need to be well provided for until he himself could again look after him. His request was approved and the lad was at once accepted just as he was. The lad could not be accepted in the hospital because he needed special attention. He was turned over to a Lutheran teacher in one of the suburbs of St. Louis with the promise that we wished to pay \$10. a month for his care and expenses. Clothing would be provided in addition.

"No outsider knew of this. It was also known to only a few people in the city. And behold, as soon as the lad had been received, the ten dollars came in from a distant source with the express instruction "for the poor orphan boys" and for the orphans' home. Someone more than 200 miles away sent the first five dollars with the special instruction "to give Christmas joy to the orphan child of a soldier." And it was just before Christmas that this lad had been received. The other five

dollars someone gave to his pastor with the direction "for the orphans' home in St. Louis." When the pastor explained that there was no orphans' home, but he might set it aside for the hospital, the donor nevertheless kept to his original intention.

"Why then should these people think of the orphans' home just at this time? They did not know that a beginning had been made in all quietness. But the Lord knew it and He wished in this way to give us courage to go ahead confidently with the establishment of the orphanage. Even though orphan children could still always be well provided for in Christian families, the provision of orphan children as had occurred among us up to this time, yet we have also ascertained that a Lutheran orphans' home is necessary here. It must be able to accept orphaned children of every age and not drive the orphan children of Lutheran parents into the orphan homes of falsely-believing associations." (Cf. "Lutheraner" Vol. XXI, p. 119f.)

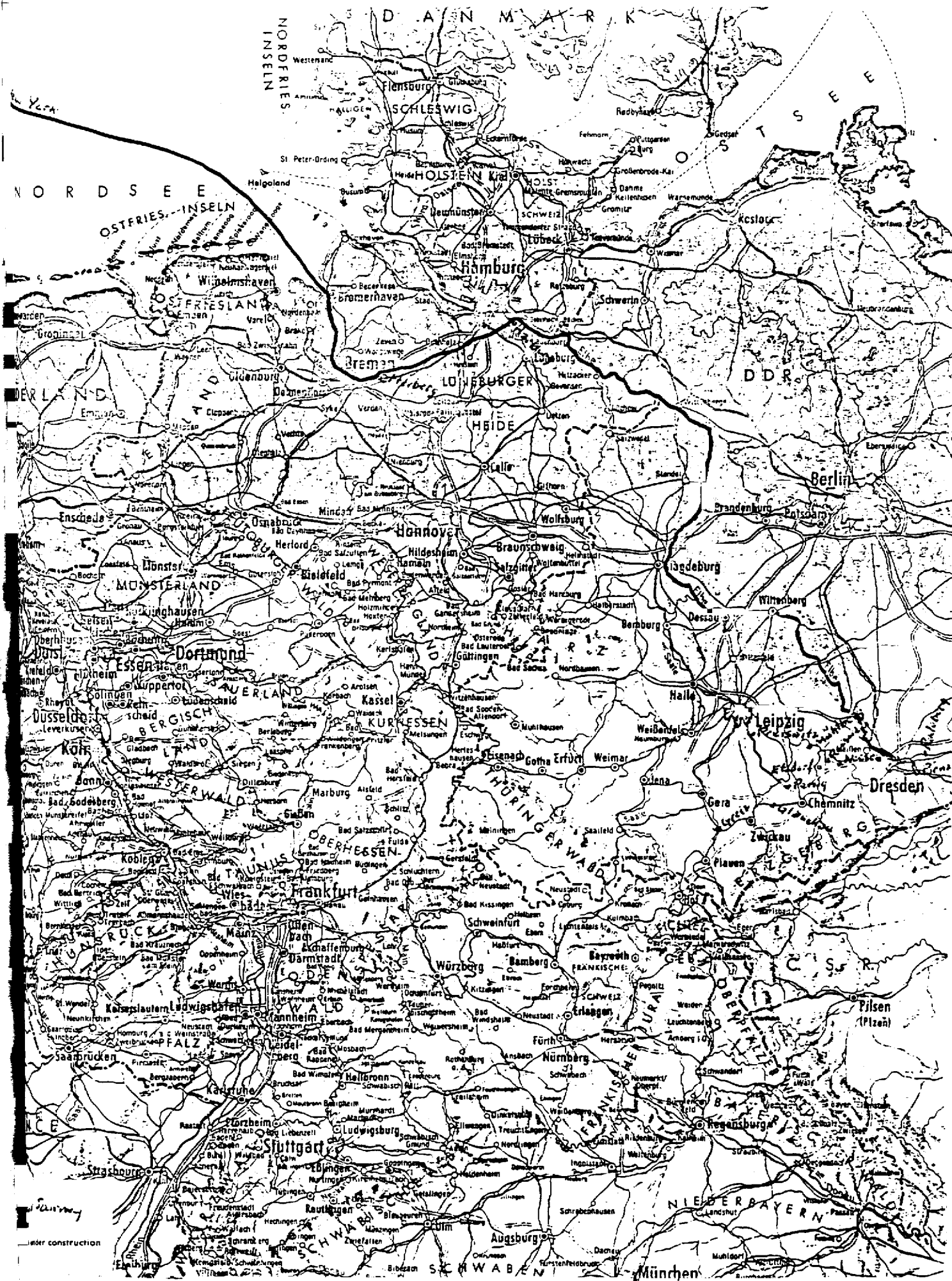
God gave also to this work, as mentioned, His blessing beyond requests and understanding. Already in the year 1867 within the parish boundaries of St. Paul's congregation on Manchester Road in St. Louis County, located 15 miles west of the city, it was possible to purchase for \$4,000 a complex of 40 acres of suitable land next to the church. An orphans' home was constructed whose dedication followed already on the 11th of October 1868. From February 1, 1881 until the same time 1882, 114 children were provided for for a longer or shorter period of time, including 20 full orphans, 81 half orphans and 13 children of unfortunate parents. With respect to nationality, 100 were of German descent, 5 English, 4 Norwegian, 3 Dutch, 1 Irish, and 1 of Italian descent. Sixteen came from Illinois, 3 from Indiana, 2 from Iowa, 75 from Missouri, 1 from Nebraska, 1 from Ohio, 3 from Tennessee,

2 from Texas, and 1 from Virginia. (The origin of 10 children could not be ascertained.)

In addition, at the end of the last orphans' home year 8 persons found themselves in the so-called "asylum" connected with the orphans' home. It was a place for the decrepit aged and otherwise infirm, who could no longer earn their living through their own work. The two-class orphanage school was used by 73 children during this period. We are far removed from wishing to give our dear Buenger the glory for this great success. This belongs only to Him who is able to give prosperity to our planting and watering. And without the generous gifts and without the faithful cooperation of fellow-believers, charitably moved by the love of Christ, our Buenger certainly could never have carried on this wonderful work. But, whoever has had only some experience in undertakings of this kind, whether as participant cooperator or as an attentive observer, will be able to measure to a certain extent, what a rare degree of faith, love, and patience is needed not only to begin such a work confidently and joyfully, but also not to look back, once the hand has been laid to the plow, neither to tire, nor to despair, but despite all the hindrances placed against it, to persevere and to remain faithful until death. And this grace God had given to our dear Buenger.

Our Buenger frequently received the request to accept, not only the weak and the imbecile into the "Asylum" he had furnished, but also even those completely insane. The plea to accept the former he granted in some cases. What concerned the latter, namely, the psychotic, he could not resolve for conscience sake. This was true as much as for the sake of the psychotic himself for whom the "Asylum" did not have the necessary provisions, as for the sake of the other "asylum residents", who would have been exposed to greater danger by these psychotic companions. But the matter

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY



deeply moved the heart of our Buenger, so that only shortly before his death he considered the possibility of establishing a Lutheran insane asylum. At the same time a plan was also maturing in his mind to establish a Lutheran foundling home, since he saw to his great sorrow that, at least here in St. Louis, foundlings were more often turned over to the nuns and so were brought as an offering to the Roman Anti-Christ. Buenger still occupied himself with this on his last sick bed.

All this, as was stated, was not the result of a selfish hyper-activity, but the consequence of his faith active in love. That is shown in his private life. His generosity knew no bounds. Whoever accosted him for a gift of love or a service of love, never did this without success if it stood within his power. There was seldom a time in which his home did not shelter a homeless person, yes, entire families, for weeks and months, and in which he did not invite them to his table. His generosity and good naturedness were so well known in the city and in the country that not only comrades in the faith, but also other believers, yes, unbelievers, not only Germans, but also people of other nationalities sought help from him in their distress. And whenever it was possible, they also found it with him. He did not wait until someone hunted him up. He himself hunted up those needing counsel and help, and frequently got himself into difficulty because of his great beneficence. Even enemies of Christianity were heard to say: If yet so many preachers do not believe what they preach to others, yet we will still be convinced that Buenger believes from his heart what he preaches.

To be sure, his good naturedness and naiveté now and then degenerated into a certain weakness. He frequently allowed himself to be deceived by completely dishonest individuals, partly through their pious conversation, partly through spurious presentation of the great distress in which they

asy-
sh a
and
tivity,
r a
t
not
and
rom
it
anted
ffl-
vere
ch to
heart
ated
d by
tion,
ney

found themselves, and squandered his benevolences upon them. He allowed himself often to be misled, upon the request of others, into recommending verbally and in writing people who were quite unworthy of such recommendation and who often misused it shamefully. If in this manner from time to time a recommendation given by our Buenger lost its importance to many, yet he never tired of counselling and helping wherever he could, and this despite the oft created experience in which his love and his trust had been betrayed. He would rather be betrayed ten times, than close his heart and hand once to a petitioner who was in any possible way really in need and worthy of help.

With respect to the family situation of our Buenger, this writer is happy to let the subject himself speak. In the year 1876, the sainted Director Lindemann requested some notes of him regarding this. The latter was just then writing the splendid negrology of our unforgettable Wyneken. Upon this request Buenger among others then answered in writing the following:

"You remind me of my departure from the scene of this world, in that you desire of me notes of my life. Only let me rest very quietly, when I have fallen asleep in the Lord through His grace. Nothing should be written of such a miserable man as I. At the same time I want to answer your questions. It is still a pleasant remembrance to which you induce me. My beloved first wife was Rosa (or properly Rosine) Mueller, a farmer's daughter from Perry County in the State of Missouri, who had emigrated and worked here. She was brought to my attention through an occasional remark of her pastor, the then Pastor Walther. He described (at the table, I believe) how Rosa Mueller had sent packing a Roman priest who wished to "convert" her. She served an Italian family, in which

the housewife would have dearly brought her into the Roman church, so that there she could provide her with a wealthy Roman husband. Yet I did not dare ask her hand in marriage. She herself had to induce me to do this. Many well-known members of the congregation wished to marry her. But she could not make up her mind, for something had to be removed. And that something was I, whom she loved. Upon the counsel of her pastor, she now permitted herself to ask me whether perhaps I too had affection for her. I made this clear and we became engaged. I do not really know when the wedding was held. It was in the autumn of 1843. She was a much more gifted person than I. She spoke a fluent English, and also Italian, and some French. She grasped everything quickly and had a good understanding of the saving doctrine. But she was always obedient and devoted for the sake of love. We had three sons together. The first was called Christian, whom I baptized soon after birth, sorrowfully aware that he would die since he was weak. My words were: 'He should only become a Christian and for that reason be called Christian!' He also died a few days after his birth. The second was called Friedrich Lutherus, since he was born on Luther's birthday. In remarkable fashion he brought with him into the world a conclusion to a cross. I concluded therefrom that he would become an unusual crossbearer. One laughed about it. He was a large boy. But when he was one year old hydrocephalism showed itself and after a couple of years of great trouble, he died. The third was called Gotthilf Nathanael. God had again helped and he should become a Nathanael. That was a lively child, full of spirit. But he died from cholera in the month of July in the great cholera year of 1849 at the age of one year and four months. This had also taken the mother eight days earlier at an age of 26 years.

"On the 20th of December 1850 I was married to Johanna Sophie Reissner, sister of the sainted Pastor Reissner. My brother-in-law united us both

times publicly in the church, the first time at Trinity church and the second time at Immanuel church. I knew the 26-28 year old young lady to be a sincere Christian, since as long as she worked here, I had been her confessor. We had four daughters together. Two died and two are still living. Katharina Coelestine died as an 18-year old girl; Maria Elizabeth when 3 years old. Lydia Johanna Maria is now in her 19th year and Agnes Dorothea in her 15th year. My foster daughter, Monica Reissner, is 26 years of age. The children are all at home. They lead a quiet, retiring life in which the mother trains them. Christian girls have access to our family and seek it. The fashion dolls stay away. Indeed, they have also learned something of fine and artistic works, also some piano playing, but the main thing is that they practice all types of housework, sewing, washing, ironing, cooking, etc. Banqueting and parties are not held, but visits of friends and guests at the table are never lacking. This is then a small family picture. I am happy about the biography of Wyneken, for there one will get something to see. In high esteem and love, Your J. F. Buenger."

Our Buenger was an original, a personality, whose entire manner was not counterfeited, not acquired, but something that developed on its own. His spirit was far removed from priestly pride. At the same time he always outwardly preserved a pastoral demeanor so that it was not unusual for him to be taken for a Catholic priest by those who did not know him. As a result, it repeatedly happened that when he entered a street car, obviously Irish people present there immediately arose and gave him a seat. Indeed, they also paid for his fare, without suspecting to be sure that they were bestowing this honor not upon a servant, but upon an implacable enemy of the

pope, as the prophesied anti-Christ.

(As this writer visited Buenger in his last illness, he told him this: On the previous night it had seemed to him as though the devil appeared and called to him that he could not die a blessed death unless he were penitently reconciled with the pope, whom he had too zealously opposed. He, however, replied to this that what he had spoken against the pope, he could not retract, since he was the anti-Christ. If he (the devil) wished to promote his penitence, he would have to bring forward other sins. Whereupon the devil removed himself.)

Buenger was far removed from giving himself the appearance of great holiness and unction (much more was he almost always happy and cheerful in company and he was accustomed to laughing heartily). Yet he also was constantly concerned about the salvation of his soul, as his trusted friends know and his diaries testify. He had a cheerful outlook and kept it all the way to his last illness. Neither his earlier, severe soul struggles nor his earlier year-long protracted illness were able to destroy it. Precisely in his last years it came to the fore more and more, as though grown young again. He had a harmonious facial mien, distinguished by a Roman nose, which bespoke a combination of good naturedness and a practical outlook. His entirely open, friendly countenance was evidence that in his love a soul lived, full of noble simplicity. His tall figure with its measured, forceful gait, always impressed everyone who saw him for the first time.

Yet we hurry to the end.

Indeed, when some months before his death he moved into the splendid new parsonage built for him by a grateful congregation, Buenger remarked that he would certainly soon have to leave it again in order to live in an even nicer home, built by God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (II Cor. 5:1) But since he was still hale and hearty, one would hope, nevertheless, that the Lord would still add a few years for the sake of his church. But his presentiment of death fulfilled itself only too soon.

On New Year's Day he still preached with complete freshness of spirit and on the day after happily celebrated his 72nd birthday in the circle of his family. But on the 4th of January of this year he suddenly became ill with an exceedingly painful abdominal inflammation, soon associated with still other appearances of illness, and necessitating an operation just as painful. At one time it appeared as though the illness had been broken, but his family's dawning of hope at this for his recovery was not fulfilled, even though so many fervent prayers for it rose to God. Early on the 23rd of January, about a quarter after seven o'clock, he fell asleep gently and without any turmoil amid the prayers and tears of those gathered at his deathbed, his family and others. This occurred after he, as far as his illness permitted, had carried on many pious conversations, blessed each individual member of his family, and strengthened himself through receiving absolution and the true body and blood of his Savior. He put his house in order and, upon being questioned, repeated with a hearty affirmation, as loud as he could, that he was also now willing and prepared to die with a confident heart in the pure grace of God in Christ and in accordance with the teaching he had preached in life.

On the 25th of January there followed the burial of the sainted Buenger in the cemetery of his congregation. Such a large crowd attended that it surpassed the present memory of the newspapers of St. Louis. The Rev. Mr. Otto Hanser preached the funeral sermon in Immanuel Church on Acts 15: 25, "Men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ." The address at the grave was given by the Rev. Mr. Georg Link. We repeat here what we have already written in another place. "At all events never has a truly evangelical pastor of young and old been mourned with more sincere tears of love and thankfulness by those near at hand and afar off than our unforgettable Johann Friedrich Buenger."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yes, the Spirit says, they shall rest from their labor; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14: 13)

Finis!

Complement
of
Lydia & Carl Keller
~~Grandchildren of the late~~
~~Capt. Frederick Rungius~~

1315 Los Toroson Dr. N.W.
Mar 10/1981 Albuquerque New Mexico 87102